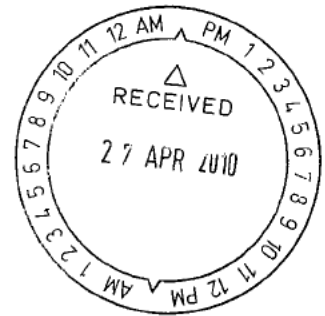
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Ms Mary Porter AM MLA
 Chair, Standing Committee on Planning, Public Works,
 and Territory and Municipal Services
 Civic Square
 London Circuit
 Canberra ACT 2600
 April 17, 2010



Dear Ms Porter,

I am concerned that there are moves afoot to prevent live music in the city of Canberra. This appears to result from the fact that more people are moving into the city to live and some of those people want it to be quiet at night as if it were a suburb.

It would be sad if the city at night was forced to behave like a suburb. A city without live music at night is not a vibrant place. We have heard from many officials that Canberra should be made more appealing for tourists. We are told that the government should spend large amounts of money to achieve this. But surely culture is what makes a city appealing? And a strong creative and original music culture is developing in Canberra.

There are many well known venues such as the Transit Bar, the Holy Grail, King O'Malley's, the Hippo and the Phoenix bar that provide live music. These venues are well established and attract many music lovers and people who seek entertainment in an environment of character. They are in good locations, downtown in commercial and retail areas, near the Canberra theatre, street cafes, restaurants, City Walk and Garema Place. The entertainment is of a varying standard, and includes some very high quality examples of local music as well as some from interstate and overseas. Canberra now has, for its size a surprisingly large music community. These local entertainers are something that this city should be proud of.

Their music does not cause fights and violence. The drunk and violent youths who cause fights in the streets are more likely to be the patrons of venues where there is no live music.

Budding musicians require places to play. Live performance is necessary for their artistic development. It also helps develop the business skills required by those pursuing music as a full-time career.

Strangely, you have received complaints about the noise of live music at night from an owner of a block of downtown residential apartments. Some people want to stop live music in the city just because they have chosen to reside in the city. Should we destroy our culture because of people who move into the city and then complain? There are plenty of suburbs available for them to live in where there is no nightlife.

Would you have our young students and our artistic community forced to relocate to Fyshwick, alongside the sex industry? Putting nightclubs into a soulless environment like Fyshwick would, I believe be a bad outcome, with dire social consequences.

I do hope you will not allow our budding culture to be hijacked by small-minded people.

Yours Faithfully

[REDACTED]

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