

From: Thomas Lee
Sent: Wednesday, 10 March 2010 10:32 PM
To: Committees
Subject: Submission to the Inquiry into Live Community Events

Thomas Lee
JERRABOMBERRA NSW 2619

Ms Mary Porter AM MLA
Chair
Standing Committee on Planning, Public Works and
Territory and Municipal Services
Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory
Civic Square, London Circuit
CANBERRA ACT 2600
committees@act.gov.au

10th March 2010

Dear Ms Porter

Having recently been made fully aware of the situation regarding the entertainment of Canberras nightlife, I wish to submit my concerns regarding this ongoing debate. In light of several similar situations across the country in cities such as Perth and Melbourne, wherein numerous venues that feature live music have been restricted and, as a result, forced to close down, I am alarmed by the possibility that it may be happening here in Canberra as well.

As I understand it, the chief complaint seems to be that the alleged noise pollution is disturbing members of the public who have made their residence in the heart of the city, a location known by virtually every resident of the city to be an area full of such venues, and said residents have decided that the venues must be made to conform to their wishes. I find numerous problems with this. Firstly, several of the venues have been in operation for longer than many of the residential areas of the city; indeed, several were operational long before some of the residential buildings, such as the Waldorf Hotel, had even been constructed. Thus these buildings were constructed with full knowledge of the venues that occupy the areas around them, and yet steps were not taken to soundproof these buildings during construction, and as a result, now there are cries from the occupants of such buildings that instead, the venues playing music should be soundproofed. This is hardly fair, or even logical, considering how recently some of these buildings were constructed as opposed to how long the music venues have been there.

Secondly, a similar situation revolves around the tenants of such locations. Having read many of the complaints online, most of them seem to be complaining that they cannot get a good nights sleep whenever the venues are open for business. I find it difficult to believe that all of these people could be unaware that such venues are right near their chosen place of residence, or that they would all neglect to think that this may pose a problem for them. For those same people to then claim that the venues are disturbing them is, as above, blatantly unfair. They moved into these areas with full knowledge of what was nearby, in a district renowned for loud music and night entertainment, and are now putting the pressure on to make the rest of the public conform to them.

Thirdly, this has the potential to cause great problems to those people whose lives involve the music venues heavily. I understand that a current target of attacks about noise levels is Transit Bar, and before that was Toast before it closed down because of those complaints. These establishments employ a number of people who work very diligently to make sure the venue is hospitable for anyone who goes there, many of whom are university students who often need to work as much as possible in order to pay for their studies. Some of these people have basic, but rewarding, jobs such as working at the bar, whereas

others work in more specialised areas such as sound technicians, who already have a hard time finding work in that field in Canberra, and even musicians endeavouring to raise their public status and gain some success. However, when Toast closed down, a number of such people found themselves out of work, and if the pressure is put upon other venues such as the Transit Bar to follow suit, then their employees will also find themselves out of work an unenviable position at any time, but especially now, in light of the job discrepancies of the last two years. To sever the business of such venues by restricting its freedom of music, or outright forcing the venues to close, would be to condemn so many people to unemployment.

The nightlife and culture of Canberra is often regarded as not worthy of notice by people from other cities, despite providing so many opportunities for young Canberrans either financially or educationally. If we are to protect these opportunities and allow the young people of Canberra the necessary opportunities to build lives for themselves, it is necessary to protect Canberras nightlife. I thank you for taking the time to read my letter and I hope you take my points into consideration.

Regards,
Thomas Lee

Meet local singles online. [Browse profiles for FREE!](#)