



**Trevor Evans MP**  
Federal Member for Brisbane

Mr Luke Howarth MP  
Chair, House Standing Committee on  
Communications and the Arts  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

21 September 2018

Dear Mr Howarth,

I am pleased to make this submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications and the Arts inquiry on *Factors contributing to the growth and sustainability of the Australian music industry*.

This submission is based on the feedback that I have received from live music industry stakeholders in my electorate of Brisbane. In particular, the serious concerns expressed that regulations being implemented by the Queensland State Labor Government are threatening the live music scene in Brisbane, and thereby undermining the future health and growth of the music industry.

Live music plays an important economic, social and cultural role in our community. Live music venues have been aptly described as the essential heartbeat of Queensland's music industry. These venues are where emerging artists develop their potential as well as derive a significant portion of their income, which income in turn drives the rest of the music industry economy. If the viability of live music performances is jeopardised, there are significant ripple effects across the value chain.

Venue owners and operators are being pushed to the wall and forced to reduce their trading hours to avoid the prohibitive additional costs involved in using mandatory ID scanners. This in turn impacts on the opportunities these venues can offer to emerging musicians to perform. Musicians have fewer and fewer venues and fewer opportunities to play, and patrons who love and actively support live music performance are starting to miss out. If this continues unaddressed, live music in Brisbane could enter a death spiral and future generations will be the ones who miss out.

All stakeholders – including the State Government in Queensland – should be seeking to sensibly protect and promote live music industry in Brisbane, which has an outstanding history and tradition.

While the mandatory ID scanning laws introduced by the Queensland State Government are claimed to be designed to reduce alcohol-related violence, there is scant evidence to support this claim. The evidence is that live music venues have minimal problems with patrons and alcohol-related violence,

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and that these operators are simply being caught in a wider regulatory net that is poorly targeted and which should be aimed at larger venues that do not have live music as part of their core offering.

A recent survey by QMusic (undertaken in March 2017) received responses from 22 of the 29 original live music venues in Brisbane's Fortitude Valley, CBD and Inner-West Brisbane (including Caxton Street), and found:

- 68 per cent of respondents have reduced the amount of live music they are staging because of the cost/impact of mandatory ID scanning laws.
- 78 per cent of respondents stated that attendance at their venue has decreased since mandatory ID scanning was initiated.
- 90 per cent of respondents have experienced operational issues with ID scanners.

It is clear from the results of this survey that mandatory ID scanning laws are having a significant adverse impact on the feasibility of original live music in Brisbane, which adverse impact is of great concern to me.

I have also **attached** a copy of the comprehensive published report *The Economic & Cultural Value of Live Music in Australia 2014*, undertaken by the University of Tasmania, which research findings may assist and further inform the committee's inquiry. This report *inter alia* found that:

- The economic value of live music to the Australian economy is over \$15.7 billion.
- An estimated 65,000 full-time and part-time jobs are reliant on the live music industry, mostly in small and medium businesses, and overwhelmingly those jobs and employment opportunities go to younger Australians.
- Live music spending in Australia delivers at least a three-to-one benefit-to-cost ratio.

I would be pleased to provide any additional information about this important issue should it assist the committee's inquiry.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Trevor".

**Trevor Evans MP**  
**FEDERAL MEMBER FOR BRISBANE**