

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees
on Education, Employment
and Workplace Relations
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Dear Committee Secretary

Fair Work Amendment (Small Business Penalty Rate Exemption) Bill 2012

I run a small business employing less than twenty full time equivalent employees. Fiasco Ristorante + Bar, in Coffs Harbour, now only trades Tuesday to Saturdays, this is to avoid Sunday and Public Holiday penalty rates, as many public holidays fall on a Monday.

I wish to provide my absolute support for the passage of this Bill through Parliament as my labour costs have blown out since the introduction of the Restaurant Industry Award regulating wages and penalty rates.

If penalty rates were abolished not only would my business be more viable on weekends I would consider employing more casual employees. We do not open on Sundays because of this ridiculous penalty rate.

Consumers expect restaurants and cafes to trade 24/7 yet this can only be achieved if it is commercially viable to trade through de-regulation of the mandatory penalty rates applied under the Modern Industrial Award system. We all live and trade under a 7 day a week working week, so it is time to change these rules so that more people can work and more people can trade! The restaurant industry is at the point of being unviable to be in, the increase in labour costs is the major reason for this.

Yours faithfully

Alexandra Hawkins

Business Owner

Fiasco Ristorante + Bar,