

Committee Secretary

Senate Standing Committees on Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

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Parliament House

Canberra ACT 2600

Australia

Submission to the Inquiry into the Fair Work Amendment (Small Business-Penalty Rates Exemption) Bill 2012

I am a permanent employee, working as a nurse, currently earning around 35 per hour.

I have been a nurse for about 20 years, I have two children who are both in university. I have a mortgage and have worked a lot of weekends to help cover the extra costs associated with having a family and to afford the extra luxuries that make working hard worthwhile.

If penalty rates were abolished, there is no incentive to work weekends, you are away from your family and miss out a lot on social events because you do work and I feel that penalty rates are fair compensation for missing out on these areas of life. If penalty rates are abolished then I will question whether I will continue to work as a nurse, If penalty rates are abolished then I would estimate that I would lose between 10 -20 000 because I do a lot of overtime and call backs and it is the penalty rates that

compensate me for getting up at 2 or 3 in the morning and rushing off to assist in a caesarian section. I do not do my job just for the love of it,.

My weekends are important to me because.I need this time to spend with my family, The politicians are always talking about the need to balance work and family and here you are wanting to tip the scales even more in favour of work. Its a nonsense.and a line that is also used every now and again is that our soldiers have died protecting our way of life , well here is a way of life that i would suggest most of our diggers in the first and second world wars would have believed to be worth fighting for..

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates.because if you don't many nurses especially the more experienced ones will vote with their feet. Its also an Auistralian value which has made us what we are. Its fair to compensate those who work shifts for the fact that they are away from shier family and miss out on a lot of social functions, There is also increasing evidence which you may wish to ignore about the adverse health effects of shift work so why add to the burden

Submitted by

Ewan Gemmell

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