

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 TAFE teacher, currently earning around \$90k per year.

I am the breadwinner in our family, supporting my partner, mother and offspring.

If penalty rates were abolished I fear that people who manage to earn their money working at odd hours will lose the edge they have established by choosing these hours. Penalty rates in my field are the way the human service industries (disability, aged care, vocational education etc) show some respect to their workers for the demands of the job, particularly in poorly-paid areas.

Weekends are important to the community because they allow dedicated time for family, community commitments etc. If weekend penalty rates are cut, it will be harder

for areas such as aged care and disability to be able to staff their programs. Most workers in these fields are in the job because of a very real commitment to the community services industry and its clients - but we should not take this commitment for granted by removing their penalty rates.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates. They are a way of ensuring fairness in our industrial sphere.

Submitted by

Liz Henigan

Monday 24th of September 2012