

Committee Secretary

Senate Standing Committees on Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

PO Box 6100

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 600 per week.

My partner and I have two small children, aged 3.5yrs & 11mths. We have a mortgage. My partner is self employed and I do shift work to fit in around his work and our kids and running the house.

If penalty rates were abolished... We would really struggle to make ends meet- I get shift penalties for most of my hours- I work 5days a fortnight and 4 of the 5 shifts are on penalty rates (including Friday and Saturday night shifts) without shift penalties my take home pay would be reduced by half and I would have to put our children in Childcare more days and work more days, barely seeing them whilst they are so young would be devastating. I consider myself extremely lucky to work in a profession

supported by an active union that has worked hard to maintain- it allows me to maintain a better work/life balance but it also helps compensate for the many nights and weekends that I am away from my family and friends.

My weekends are important to me because...They are the times that family and friends catch up and spend time together- our children have swimming classes now and as they get older they will likely want to participate in more sporting and social activities - importantly, at the moment as our children are so young, we are trying to spend time together as a family. Working nights and weekends can be hard as I miss family celebrations such as birthday parties, baptisms/christenings, engagements and weddings.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates. They compensate for time lost with family and friends and conversely make it possible to work the hours I do to fit around my kids- without penalty rates our family would really be struggling financially! Please don't get rid of our means of paying our bills and mortgage and our kid'd's education!

Submitted by

Zoe Yates

Wednesday 19th of September 2012