

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 Registered Nurse, currently earning around \$37 per hour.

We are a single income family with one primary aged child still at home, we have raised 3 older who are all employed or studying at tertiary level.

We have a mortgage and private health insurance and do not receive any govt benefits. My husband has been unable to obtain any permanent work for several years, as is the case with many men his age in our area.

If penalty rates were abolished...

my income would be reduced by approx 20,000 per year or 2/3 of our mortgage payment! I and my colleagues work a 24/7 rotating roster, we work Christmas Day,

Easter sunday and more weekends than not, not because we choose to but because our workplace requires us to. I work full time shift work in an Emergency Dept, get abused physically and verbally by patients and thier relatives on a regular basis, often don't get meal breaks, sometimes don't even get time to go to the bathroom during my 8 or 10 hour shift. If penalty rates as they stand are abolished then I will be hard pressed to find reason to stay, and would, like many of my colleagues, look for alternate employment.

My weekends are important to me because...

I currently work at least 3 out of 4 weekends due to my workplace demands for senior clinical cover. I frequently miss out on attending my childrens sporting activities and they miss out on spending thier days off with Mum.

Reduction or removal to weekend and evening/night penalties would result in me seeking alternate employment. Nurses get paid a reasonable amount on paper, but many public servants and teachers earn more without having to work weekends, public holidays and shift work. If penalties are abolished, there will be little incentive to take up nursing as a career, or to stay in it. Good luck finding someone to give you CPR, pain relief or a bed pan at night or the weekends!

Submitted by

Elizabeth Metz

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