

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.

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.

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.

I might add that this is especially exacerbated in the rural tourism areas of Australia. The majority of people visit my business on weekends and public holidays, however penalty rate payments mean that while consumers demands are not being met at these times (through necessity of keeping less staff on during these times) My weekday trade is heavily subsidising my weekend wage bill. Apart from the fact that I do not want to see our town, based largely on tourism, die completely by being a 'closed town', I would actually be financially better off closing on public holidays.

Yours faithfully

Kirsten Pitman

Owner

Nino's of Victor Harbor