

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

I am a single mum who has worked fulltime for 33 years, with a mortgage, and I have a daughter in high school and my son has just finished university studying to become a policeman.

If penalty rates were abolished... my income would be reduced. Thank goodness I have been able to work the shifts with the penalty rates throughout the 33 years full time that I have worked. When I left my husband (domestic violence) I had two small children and I was financially embarrassed trying to keep the family together and grow them up with minimal assistance / maintenance from my children's father.

My weekends are important to me because... my son ended up playing state basketball (he is now 23years old) and my daughter still is a state athlete (now 17 years) and I will need to find money and request the day off work to take her to a state competition in mid October. I was the sausage mum (managed the BBQ) at the local Little Athletics for 3 years on a Thursday evening. With working full time my time is very precious to my family.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates. Without penalty rates I would not have been able to take my children to their competitions from our rural town. I witnessed very capable and talented children miss out on these competitions as the families were unable to afford the cost of the travel and accomodation plus the specialised coaching. I managed to give my children such a great start in life with their confidence as I just managed the finances, often going out myself. I can remember wondering how I was going to pay for a new pair of work shoes for myself. Hopefully my son will make a good policeman soon and my daughter, year 12 this year, will go to university next year for four year doing a double degree.... and I will need to earn penalty rates to help her as she will get only a very small (a few dollars only) Youth Allowance.

Submitted by

Alena Ward

Tuesday 25th of September 2012