

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 aged care nurse, currently earning around \$19 per hour.

I am married with 2 children, one lives at home and is attending university next year, the other lives away from home. My husband and I both work in aged care.

If penalty rates were abolished... it would mean great financial difficulty. My husband and I are in our 50s'. My husband works every weekend and myself every second weekend. It would mean losing income of around \$300 a week. Aged care nursing and child carers are the lowest paid workers in NSW at present, we earn less than what a person at the checkouts in supermarkets earn, yet our job is physically heavier, more stressful and sometimes thankless than most. Jobs are hard to come by these days, especially when you start to get older so your job choices are limited.

My weekends are important to me because...we are part of a very large family, therefore we often miss out on special family events or the family sometimes have to work around our hours. We miss out socially as we have to start work at 6.30a.m and need to be on top of our game, so no late nights and events mostly happen on weekends.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates. I know Mr. Xenophon's bill is only targeted at restaurants, catering or retail at the moment, but if this bill is passed it would only be a matter of time before all Australian shift workers will be affected and this would be devastating. Look, we would love to NOT have to work weekends but without the penalties we would not be able to survive. We do not have the privilege of owning our own home, so we have to pay rent, which is constantly on the rise as well as utilities, especially electricity and water. "PLEASE WE NEED OUR PENALTIES. DON'T TAKE THEM AWAY"

Submitted by

Wendy Starr

Tuesday 25th of September 2012