

Committee Secretary

Senate Standing Committees on Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

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Submission to the Inquiry into the Fair Work Amendment (Small Business-Penalty Rates Exemption) Bill 2012

I am a permanent employee, working as a IT Manager, currently earning around 100000 per year.

I don't have penalty rates myself, but I used to work in retail on weekends. Anyone who has ever worked weekends knows that it is a penalty in itself. As a casual, most of my hours were weekend work since retailers aim to put junior and casual staff on then.

The vast majority of the cities cultural and community events take place on weekends. As well as social events. To be excluded from these on the basis of the industry in which you work is itself a penalty.

As far as I can tell, the only reason offered for the removal of penalty rates is to increase profits. It might be objected that strong profits equal a strong economy. But what kind of society do we want to live in - one where, e.g., we all work 80hours/week and have strong economic growth? Or one in which work and life are better balanced? These are not technical economic questions that some professor can answer. These are political questions. I couldnot more vigorously oppose the politics of the proposed removal of penalty rates. But to return to economics, if reducing penalty rates is the main option being considered to drive growth, we need smarter and more innovative managers to find better solutions. To lump this on already penalised weekend workers can only be seen as the shameful act it is.

Submitted by

Tim Niven

Wednesday 19th of September 2012