

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 Bunnings team member, currently earning around 21 per hour.

I am married with 2 grown up children. In line with government advice, I have been trying to prepare for the future by investing in rental property so as not to be reliant on the small age pension.

If penalty rates were abolished, I would be in negative finances every week and would have to sell my investment property currently at a loss. This would leave me in financial trouble not only now (I am 58) but also when I retire. By changing penalty rates, it would be changing the entire financial basis on which I planned my future.

My weekends are important to me because, everyone else I know works Monday to

Friday. My 1 day free at weekends is the only time I get to spend with my wife, children and grandchildren.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates. I work into the retail industry. I do not choose to work in this industry but was left with little choice after being retrenched from a well paid job as an I.T. Systems engineering project manager. The hours are long, the work physically demanding (I work in a Bunnings warehouse), and the customers often difficult, especially on weekends when they have often bitten off more than they can chew. Stopping penalty rates would not only affect people's wages but would cause disruption because often, people only agree to work on certain days (ie Sundays) because of the extra pay. If the pay is reduced, many people will not work those days and others will be FORCED (with threat of job loss or other sanctions such as reduced shifts !) to fill in, especially older people who are more vulnerable as they usually have greater store and product knowledge, and whom management know would find it hard to get work else where.

Submitted by

Patrick Steel

Thursday 20th of September 2012