

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 clerk, currently earning around \$30 per hour.

I am a single person who rents in Sydney and due to the high cost of living am unable to save a deposit for a property of my own.

If penalty rates were abolished my friends would suffer greatly. They work in the hospitality industry and require the penalty rates to be able to make ends meet, for some of them it is literally the difference between having a roof over their heads or becoming homeless. As for my student friends penalty rates are the only way they can meet their associated education debts.

My weekends are important to me because it allows valuable time with my family and

friends. This is the only time we can as a community converse, help each other with chores/children etc and generally have some quality time together. When working on the weekends you miss out on so many family/friend events and it is the penalty rates that help alleviate some of the stress/burden of having to choose between conflicting priorities..... you know if you work that particular shift....maybe next weekend you can take the family somewhere or have a treat with them to try and alleviate the stress and hurt your absence has caused.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates to allow the people, who are often some of the lowest paid workers, to be able to survive. These funds are vital for their family and their own sense of self worth as an employee. It is about work/life balance. Penalty rates are a small compensation for those people who have to work, therefore enabling others to be provided with services such as waitresses, retail representatives etcetera and the privilege of being able to enjoy with their own family. Taking penalty rates from low income and weekend workers is not only abhorrent but extremely short sighted.

Submitted by

Lara Shanahan

Wednesday 19th of September 2012