

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees
on Education, Employment
and Workplace Relations
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Dear Committee Secretary

Fair Work Amendment (Small Business Penalty Rate Exemption) Bill 2012

I run a small business employing less than twenty full time equivalent employees.

I wish to provide my absolute support for the passage of this Bill through Parliament as my labour costs have blown out since the introduction of the Restaurant Industry Award regulating wages and penalty rates. It is now not worth me opening on a Sunday or a public holiday. The result is that I now cannot afford to employ uni students on these days as they are too expensive. Therefore the net result is that I am employing less people and stretching my hours and my full timers.

If penalty rates were abolished not only would my business be more viable on weekends I would consider employing more casual employees.

Consumers expect restaurants and cafes to trade 24/7 yet this can only be achieved if it is commercially viable to trade through de-regulation of the mandatory penalty rates applied under the Modern Industrial Award system.

We are heading too a dark phase in our hospitality sector if these rates are not changed. I foresee weekends like ghost towns with nowhere to eat and drink and a diminished source of income for university students and other casual workers that use work on the weekend to supplement their income.

I cannot express strongly enough how these rates are adversely affecting my business. I am now currently looking at getting out of hospitality after 20 years as a result!

Yours faithfully

Nick Abbink