

Committee Secretary

Senate Standing Committees on Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

PO Box 6100

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 nurse, currently earning around per hour.

I am married with one child and an average home mortgage.

If penalty rates were abolished... it would directly effect my income and would directly influence my continued desire to contribute to weekend nursing. In fact without the addition reward for weekend work I would cease to work those shifts and I would be happy to give up nursing all together if this situation were forced.

My weekends are important to me because...My weekends represent the normal rhythem of life and an opportunity to spend valuble time with family and friends and attend my daughters sporting events. Obviously my nursing duties have directly interfered with my family commitments and I seek to minimise this, I will be happy to

relinquish all weekend work if it is not recognised as beyond normal, in fact if you wish to close hospitals over the weekend like most other industries I will be more than happy to spend that time uninterrupted with my family.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates. Nurses form the heart of all our health services yet they are the least respected, least recognised, most abused and devalued by governments seeking to undermine our role in health services and clearly the least paid. Take away any other service and nurses will keep the system functioning but take away the nurses and the whole thing comes tumbling down, we are the system, if you do not recognise our value or respect us then shut the hospitals down over the weekend and we will live our lives like everyone else and see you first thing monday. If you want the life saving service that we do in fact provide then you need to acknowledge it, reward it and above all respect it. Nurses are the most under appreciated component of the healthcare system, abused and ignored, well we are ready for the fight and we look forward to the opportunity to stand united and demand our rights, in fact it is time that nurses used their power to demand more and the denial of penalty rates will create exactly the right atmosphere for that to happen, the sooner the better.

Submitted by

Nick Dunne

Tuesday 25th of September 2012