

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 teacher, currently earning around 68000 per year.

I am a teacher working full time in the public school system. I work with many at risk students and their families. I have a mortgage and am looking to start a family within the next two years.

If penalty rates were abolished it would mean that many families I work with would be forced to work weekends without any financial compensation for giving up important family time. There are many families I work with who would not be prepared to give up this family time without financial compensation meaning that the small businesses employing them would struggle to find staff.

In my local community i believe that without penalty rates for employees, many of the

shops and cafes would not be able to find staff to open on weekends which would severely reduce the ability for me to connect with my family and friends.

As I am a full time teacher, my weekdays are extremely busy and I am unable to leave work during regular business times. I have very little time during the week to spend time with family and friends, go shopping or go to places such as the post office. I rely on the weekends to do these things and so rely on places of business being open for me to access.

On top of that I have many friends who sometimes work on weekends which restricts the time available for me to spend time with them.

Weekends are an important time to socialise and have some form of leisure time. Mental health is a neglected topic within our community and it is the social events we attend on weekends which help us deal with the stress and strain of the working week.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates.

It is important to acknowledge the vital role weekends play in our society.

Small businesses will suffer as they will be less able to find staff willing to work on weekends without penalty rates.

Families will be penalised as they may be required to work and give up essential family time without any compensation.

Communities will suffer as the businesses which they frequent may no longer be able to open on weekends which will detract from the ability for communal areas to be vibrant hubs of activity.

I again urge the committee to recognise the importance penalty rates play in our society and keep penalty rates in place.

Submitted by
Daniel Cohen

Wednesday 19th of September 2012