

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 employee, working as a laboratory assistant, currently earning around \$20 per hour.

I'm a full time veterinary student, and as my course is so demanding, can only work weekends. I've been denied Austudy payment as I had already studied (mostly under my own finances), and my only source of income is my weekend job.

If penalty rates were abolished in my industry, I would not be able to survive on the normal pay rate - I would only be making \$150 gross income per week, versus the \$263 I make at the moment. My rent and fuel expenses are higher than \$150 a week, without even considering food, other bills, and uni expenses. I'd have to drop out of uni with only one year left in my degree.

My weekends are important to me because...they are the only time I have as a full-time student to make any money.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates. People rely on them to get by. They are not a 'bonus', they are a necessity. I need penalty rates for weekend work in order to survive. People who are forced to work weekends should be fairly compensated for this. Please do not abolish penalty rates - there will be a huge impact on the Australian way of life, and many more people who are already living in very difficult circumstances will become more desperate and hopeless. I am doing all I can to get an excellent education and use my potential, and if I was unable to earn penalty rates in my job, there is no doubt that I would have to give up my study in order to survive, and give up my lifelong dream. Although I don't work in retail or hospitality, I understand how important penalty rates are for these workers. Please help Australia keep its hope and way of life by continuing to fairly compensate weekend workers.

Submitted by

Kym Russell

Friday 14th of September 2012