

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 retail assistant, currently earning around \$18.35 per hour.

I have been widowed for nearly 20 years and my income is it for me. My children now have their own lives and even without having their dad around, are both productive and contributing people to our country. I have 2 grandchildren.

If penalty rates were abolished... I would lose round about \$105 per week. My company insisted we work 3 out of 4 weekends, which I uncomplainingly have done for the last 3 years. Our union has negotiated penalty rates on our behalf for Saturday and an increase for our Sunday penalty rates, for which we were all extremely grateful. Now with rising costs in shopping and general living, I am unable to live on what I earn. And I would never be able to give a loving home to another rescue pet if I

was unable to afford to give proper everyday and vet care. No companionship for me. I would be truly living alone.

My weekends are important to me because...I love to see my son and grandchildren, and spend quality time with my last rescued companion cat. My rescued dog and other cat have died after many wonderful years of being members of my family.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates. To look to a future of being unable to share my love with rescued pets and maybe even losing my home for which my husband and I have worked hard is absolutely awful. Without penalty rates, what would be the incentive to work the odd hours that we do, when it does mean we miss out on some family events. It does seem that the vast majority of people in the community expect shops to be open all hours and days and we are the ones allowing it to happen, so why should we be doubly penalised. As an older member of the community I am very fearful of the future, particularly for those in a similar position to myself being on one's own and over 60 years of age.

Submitted by

Margaret Gissing

Tuesday 2nd of October 2012