

Committee Secretary

Senate Standing Committees on Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

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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 registered nurse, currently earning around 38.00 per hour.

I have four children, a mortgage and I am studying part-time to earn continuing education points to maintain my registration.

If penalty rates were abolished my income would reduce significantly. I receive evening shift, night shift and weekend penalty rates which contribute to every pay I receive. My income would fall by \$8000-10000 per annum.

My weekends are important to me because my children play sports on Saturdays, I attend church on Sundays and I spend time with my family on weekends. Our lives are busy and it's a time to be together and share each other's company. When I work

weekends I often miss games, miss seeing goals scored and miss offering timely commiserations. I miss church and the associated fellowship. I miss spending time with my family doing simple things together that most people take for granted. All of these missed moments affects the lives of my children, my husband and myself but it is taken for granted that I must work my share of shifts because I work in a 24/7 industry. This does not mean that the 24 hours of the day and the 7 days of the week are equal. We all feel the loss of time spent worked at nights and on weekends more so than time spent working 'office hours'.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates. It will not be worth working on weekends or night shifts if penalty rates are abolished. If people are expected to work when others are enjoying their 'office hours lives' then they should be adequately compensated. Retail employers enjoy the benefits of longer trading hours with increased patronage and profits. It should not be expected that retail employees lose income as well as family time so that retailers can further increase their profits.

My concern extends also to the cheap labour which is being contracted by many Australian companies. Employers see that they can pay below award rates to overseas contracted staff and want to extend those rates to Australian workers. Can I suggest that overseas contracted workers receive adequate compensation for their work, commensurate with Australian award payments instead of attempting to lower the pay rates of Australian workers.

Finally, despite trading hours extending to almost 24/7 coverage this does not mean that each and every hour of each and every day is of equal value. Australians value their weekends, people need to sleep at night, even God rested on the 7th day. People who work during the hours and days designated for sleep and rest should be paid additionally as compensation for their loss.

Thank you for your consideration of my submission.

Submitted by

Sally Bamblett

Tuesday 25th of September 2012