

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 employee, working as a Senior School Officer, currently earning around 32 per hour.

I am a recently seperated parent of 2 teenage children, one aged 15 and one aged 17 years. Both have just recently recieved work in the hospitality business.

If penalty rates were abolished my daughters would not get paid overtime on Sunday or Saturday night. It helps them to buy things I cant afford, on my income. They both work on weekends as they also attend full time school. Their income would be greatly reduced if they didnt get penalty dates and it would mean they would need to work longer hours to maintain their level of pay. As they are school children they already work long hours 5-8hrs and they still have to do homework, assignments, essays, study for exams, do their chores and get to and from work. One daughter has to travel

for 1.5hrs to get to work in the city and then work between 5-8hrs and then do another 1.5hours travel to get home. Her sunday is a really long day, getting up at 8.30am and returning home at 11.30pm, usually very exhausted as she has been on her feet all day. She then has to get up on Monday at 7am. If she didnt get penalty rates she would have to take up more afternoon shifts which would greatly affect her study, attendance at school, health and stress level.

Both my girls will be stressed if they had to work long hours and manage school and social life. If you want children to be well educated encourage them to stay at school and not work long hours to make a decent wage so they can get ahead.

My weekends are important to me because it is the only time I have free. I work full time and long hours being a single mother, and also train full time. If I had to work on the weekends, then life would be too stressful and will affect my health and leisure time. My teenage children are growing up fast, and I want to spend what free time we have together as a family. The family and a strong family that spends time together is a strong structure to base society on and should be protected and nurtured. You need to spend quality time, its is not all work and no play. Suicide and stress level rates are high in Japan due to their ridiculous work ethics and hours. The weekend is the time to relax for those who need to have a break and we are constantly being forced to work longer hours and this has been proven time and time again in research papers that this is not healthy or sustainable.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates. We must protect penalty dates so that those who choose to work on the weekends giving up their free time to earn the rates they deserve. The weekend should be family time, or personal time. Some people are forced to work weekends for financial reasons as the pay is better, but they do not get

a chance to enjoy the weekends with their friends and family as the majority of Australia does. You may well find that small business will find it harder to find staff if the pay is dropped during the weekend as it is not worth it, this may well affect hospitality and retail stores greatly and then have a flow on effect on the economy.

Submitted by

Vilma FitzGerald

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