

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 casual employee, working as a kitchen hand, currently earning around 18 per hour.

I'm a student in Victoria working at a major fast-food chain. I'm originally from rural Victoria, near _____, and have moved to Melbourne straight out of highschool to attend uni. I rely heavily on the generosity of my family and benefits from the federal government to be able to support myself and live out of home. With the money from work, particularly my long weekend shifts, I just get by.

If penalty rates were abolished... Most of my income is derived from my long Sunday shifts. My work pays me time and a half on Sundays, and a little extra on Saturdays. As a student I mostly work on weekends. If penalty rates were abolished, I'd have to hope to get more shifts and probably skip some classes to take them on, as I have

about 30 contact hours.

My weekends are important to me because...for myself and many students, it's not so much about not working on weekends. For us, penalty rates are important because those 48 hours are when we get our most shifts. By abolishing the penalty rate for weekends, students would be under even greater financial pressure. By reducing the amount the private sector, through wages, supports young people, these costs will ultimately be passed on to the public. Either through an increased upward pressure on welfare for students, or decreased quality of higher education due to the truancy this would lead to as students skip more and more classes to work longer hours, abolishing penalty rates would have a negative effect as public policy.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates. It's largely working, lower income people who will be affected by any negative changes to penalty rates, as they largely apply only to minimum wage jobs. Please don't sacrifice the Australian work-life balance, the envy of our region, in the name of mindless efficiency-drives.

Submitted by

Rowan Payne

Monday 8th of October 2012