

Committee Secretary

Senate Standing Committees on Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

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Canberra ACT 2600

Australia

Submission to the Inquiry into the Fair Work Amendment (Small Business-Penalty Rates Exemption) Bill 2012

I would like to make a submission to the Senate Committee, opposing the removal of penalty rates for weekend and public holiday work. I am a mother of 4 children (now mostly grown up) and found that weekend work required in my job was a significant disruption to family life; meaning that I could not take my child to social or sporting events, help them with homework or just spend that important time together. While I understood the necessity of weekend work (National Parks) I believe that without the check that the payment of penalties places on employers, much unnecessary and disruptive weekend work will be required of employees. And while weekends may be similar to other work days for some employment groups, it is certainly not the same for the children whose parents are required to work.

In addition, my young adult children work often in the restaurant business. I feel they are very vulnerable employees, often being asked (and virtually coerced through fear

of dismissal) into working with nil notice, or being sent home on any day if trade is slow due to weather or other reasons. Again the legal requirements for penalties gives them a slight recompense against being required to work on weekends when friends and family are not working.

If we are wealthy enough as a society to patronise the vast number of cafes, restaurants, casinos and music venues open on weekends, I believe we are wealthy enough to recompense staff for giving up their weekends to service us!

Submitted by

Susan Jackson

Friday 14th of September 2012