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# 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 40 per hour.

I have a family and mortgage and I am currently a student. I have previously relied on penalty rates to achieve my current financial position and have friends and family who would be unfairly affected by the proposed legislation

If penalty rates were abolished... it would make it very difficult for many single mothers and students I know. I am aware of how difficult it can be when you are trying to improve your life. Without penalty rates I would never have been able to complete my nursing studies. Additionally my Mother would have never been able to keep our house when we were children as she was reliant on them to pay the bills as a single mother.

As a nurse I have happily worked weekends to support my community. However it has impacted on my social life and family life. Shift work has a negative impact on health. Child minding costs are higher on the weekend. Those that choose to work weekends should be financially supported for the hardships they endure for the community. I would not have chosen to be a nurse if I did not get penalty rates. Unfortunately those targeted by this legislation rarely have an opportunity to choose the work they do and already live on the lowest of incomes

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates. I challenge the senators to consider what it would mean for them if they could no longer choose which weekends they work. If they were reliant on weekend work if they would continue working if the pay was the same as the child care minding fees. How they would survive on minimum wage if their wage was halved. Whether or not they could afford to live as a student if their pay rate was halved and they were earning below the minimum wage. Whether as a disadvantaged student they would continue to study if it meant they did not have the income to support them. These are the sorts of questions many people will have to ask if the proposed legislation is enacted.

Submitted by
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