

Committee Secretary

Senate Standing Committees on Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

PO Box 6100

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 Nurse, currently earning around 51 per hour.

I have a partner but no children. I am the principle income earner as my partner is a minimum wage earner. We have a mortgage which I am hoping to pay off before I retire. Although I currently do not work shift work I have in the past.

If penalty rates were abolished many people would no longer want to work on weekends or night shifts. Many people sacrifice the quality of their life in order to make ends meet by working shift work.

Many of people working shifts in small business are very low paid workers who depend upon the shift penalties to make a living wage and support their families. I find it incredible that someone like Senator Xenophon would suggest taking this away and

inflicting such hardship on people. Has Senator Xenophon ever done shift work himself, if he had I would think he would understand that it is not much fun to work shifts.

People working shifts are always missing out on something be it a party, an important family function or joining in a sporting group just to name a few. It must also be noted that research has shown that shift workers die earlier and have poorer health. I believe that in a fair and just society people should at least be compensated financially for these sacrifices.

My weekends are important to me because that when all my friends and family are not working and available to socialise. Weekends are when people have weddings and christenings and other family functions. Sunday is the day when a person is allowed to do nothing, Tuesday is not the same.

I value my weekend particularly because I have not enjoyed as many as other people in my life due to shift worker.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates.

Submitted by

Jennifer Thompson

Tuesday 25th of September 2012