

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 counsellor, currently earning around 50 per hour.

I am an older worker on the verge of retirement. I am of the generation that has fought long and hard to obtain decent working conditions for the majority of Australians. Over my working life I have seen a steady erosion and diminution of those conditions particularly around the casualisation of the work force. In my daily work and life I see the downside of workers having less and control over the hours they work and their opportunities for full-time employment. This has a devastating-and often unseen-impact on their quality of life. For instance how they can plan to take out loans for mortgages, big purchases etc. All the reforms in the workplace seem to be about keeping the employers on side and not too much concern for workers, particularly the lower paid and casual employees. I really think we need to be smart and clever in how we reorganise the modern work places to be viable and still pleasant with some level of

security for employees. This move by Senator Xenophon is going in the wrong direction again giving more 'flexibility' to employers and less certainty to employees in low waged and casual jobs. It will lead to more competition between already stressed workers as some will undoubtedly still give up their precious weekend time with family and friends just to secure this work, because they are desperate. Do we really want to drive down wages in the 'Gina Rheinhardt' way.

Please vote down this bill.

Sincerely

Janice Poulson

If penalty rates were abolished I would once again see people around me making difficult decisions about time spent with the family against how desperately they need those dollars.

My weekends are important to me because I appreciate that I am a skilled worker and can decide whether I need to work weekends or not and the kind of rates I can charge. However I am very much aware of others in my family/friendship circle who will be making hard decisions reducing their quality of life if this bill gets through.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates.

Let us not go down the pathway of the USA where people can be working so hard in these lower paid jobs and suffering a diminution in their quality of life-in the interest, ultimately of corporate profits.

Submitted by

Janice Poulson

Monday 17th of September 2012