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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 Child and Family Health Nurse, currently earning around $37.00 per hour.

I am now a day worker in Community Health. When my children were young (and we had a mortgage) I worked night/evening/weekends as a Registered Nurse in a small rural hospital. A couple of years ago I asked my son (now in 2nd year Uni) what that was like for him - his reply: 'Mum we never saw you'. Those penalty rates are the only reason I worked the awful shifts when everyone else was having 'a life'... now I realize I have lost some of my children's lives -we paid the mortgage... at what cost? (my heart still aches) - however that is another story for the shift worker..

If penalty rates were abolished and I still worked shit shifts (sorry about that) I certainly would fight tooth and nail to get the plumb day shifts.

My weekends are important to me because that is the only time there is left to really have relationships with friends/family...I missed many presentations at my children's school due to shift work.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates. Otherwise who will work those family unfriendly hours. There has to be a payoff for being awake at 2 am. The health risks are not worth it... the penalty rates are the payoff.

Submitted by
Trudie Laffan
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