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 TAFE Teacher, currently earning around per hour.

I am married with 4 children. I have been required to work weekends over the years in Heavy industry and in the construction industry. I am not currently required to work weekends so changes to the weekend penalty rates will not affect me directly. In the past I have sacrifised my weekends with family to work purely for the additional money to help make a decent life for my family. I would not have done so if there was no compensation in the form of penalty rates.

If penalty rates were abolished it would affect my children, 2 of which currently work in the hospitality industry on weekends. We encourage them to do this so that they become a contributing member of society and develop a good work ethic. As it is their

wages are poor including the penalty rates. The company they work for finds it difficult to attract staff for weekend work as it is, as many people believe their time with family and friends is worth more than the pay they receive including penalty rates. Life is short, precious, and the time for bonding to create stable family environments is the weekend. Weekends should not be a luxury only afforded to some, but rather a rite available to ALL.

My weekends are important to me because my family is important to me. Weekends are when my children play sport which is encouraged by the government to help combat the increasing obesity problems in society today. Weekends is the time we as a family get to grow and develop together.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates. Abbolishing penalty rates will encourage exploitation of workers young and old alike, who will be forced to work longer hours to maintain the incomes they have at present, particularly the vulnerable people who may have limited choices as to the employment they can pursue. On the employers side of the argument I also believe abolishing penalty rates will make it more difficult for employers to attract good staff on weekends as people will be less likely to sacrifice their quality family/social time for no compensation.

Submitted by
Steve Kenworthy
Wednesday 19th of September 2012