

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 , currently earning around per hour.

I am a single parent. My daughter is independant now, and I am about to return to my studies. I worked to support my daughter and myself. It was difficult to earn sufficient to support us both and find the time to be a good parent. Occasionally I needed to take weekend work to bring in enough income to pay for school outings, car repairs, and other out of the ordinary expenses.

If I were still a single parents, and penalty rates were abolished, my income would have been reduced by around 30%, meaning I would have had to work more nights or weekends to provide an adequate (but not extravagant) standard of living. This would be at the expense of time with my daughter.

My weekends are and were important to me because it this is the only time when one can spend significant time with one's children. Anyone should be able to recognise that if children are at school during the week, only weekends are available to give children all the time that they should be entitled to with a parent. And why should it only be children that we concern ourselves with? I work hard all week, and I am entitled to spend time amongst people in my community. Obviously most opportunities in the community for recreation, education, volunteering and many other things are scheduled for weekends when the greatest numbers of people are available to participate.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates. Any attempt to reduce or eliminate them is represents not only a cut in pay, but will result in having employers drive a wedge between parents and their families, people and their communities and so you feel just a little fear, voters and their representatives. Any politician who votes in favour of splitting families and communities by trying to abolish our days of rest will never receive my vote- only my condemnation.

Submitted by

Scott O'Keeffe

Thursday 13th of September 2012