

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Education, Employment and Workplace
Relations
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

I am shocked and disappointed that this committee is seriously considering a bill designed to slash the wages of some of the most vulnerable and lowly paid workers in the country.

For years I worked as a casual in catering at big sporting venues. The insecure work and low pay was only ever worthwhile because of the penalties for weekend work. Often, the shifts were so short that the pay barely covered my travelling expenses.

Workers in cafes and restaurants are some of our most vulnerable and exploited workers, often coming from non-English speaking backgrounds, young people, or women with small children struggling to return to the workplace.

These people are paid very poorly and need to be compensated for giving up their weekends and missing the opportunity to spend time with family and friends.

Any employer has to take pay rates into account as a cost of running their business. Some of them couldn't make a living if you gave them slaves, and it shouldn't be up to the workers to subsidise their poor business skills.

Stop blaming the workers and give employers the skills they need to run their businesses without exploiting their workers.

Sincerely

Heather Smith