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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 Nurse, currently earning around 52 per hour.

Hi I am a single mother of a 9 year old with a mortgage and history of breast cancer. At the moment my current work place do not ask me to work weekends, if there were no penalties they would phone me when ever they felt like it and ask me to come in when ever they felt they had the need. (I do get phoned on the weekend from time to time) At the moment my current income is relatively high, so penalties stops them from doing this. They have phone me on days off mid week and asked me to come in at short notice on a number of occasions.

When I was junior and a part time mother I always got the awful shifts, because part times staff get often get 2nd choice. The ONLY thing that saved me from getting all sorts of weekend & night shifts was that there are penalties so men and women

without children, or with partners self selected to do the shifts no one else wanted to do. In the past I always got the day-light-saving shift where you work 9 hours night duty and get paid 8 hours. It is always the softer gentler people who are taken advantage of. Please save people who are not the type that managers are scared of.

In about 1998 night duty penalties went from 15% to 12.5% a significant number of nursing staff who worked permanent night duty resign, or transfer to day shifts. That meant that a number of mothers who had asked to do mid week morning shifts where suddenly required to do night duty. Many of these mothers actually left nursing altogether as they had partners who could support them, and the ability to get jobs in other industries. This is a huge drain on our knowledge pool. If we had kept them on staff they could have increased their hours when the children were old. When our hospital (private) realised what the impact was on staff, they actually put the rates back up again.!! This would not happen in industries, where labour is cheap and plentiful.

Soon I am going to need extra money and have have been looking at doing extra weekend shifts, when my daughter is with her father. It would be devastating for me, and a $ nightmare if penalties were removed.

If penalties where abolished I can assure you that women who wanted to keep their jobs rather than upset the boss would end up leaving children at home by themselves of in the care of "older" children. Putting food on the table is very important. Please protect the children of single mothers, their safety and even their lives are at stake.

My weekends are important to me because I love my daughter and wish to take her to her music and ballet lessons. In the past I worked one shift weekend per week for 5 years ,and this worked well of everyone. I love the penalties

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates. Because it is always the person who can not easily stand up for themselves that employers take advantage off.

Submitted by
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