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Committee Secretary

Senate Standing Committees on Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

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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 Registered Nurse, currently earning around $38 per hour.

I have 2 grown children, 4 grandchildren and continue to work part-time and pay a mortgage. I live in a defacto relationship and my partner works full-time, has 3 grown children and mortgage payments to manage.

I feel abolishing penalty rates would be a monumental backward step for our society. I have worked shift work, including weekend work, for approximately 15 years and in doing so I have missed many family events, outings with friends and time with my partner. I chose to change my area of work earlier this year to a specialty area in which I no longer have to work night shifts or Sundays. In doing so I have accepted a substantial reduction in my income, approximately $300 net per fortnight in order to

have more time with family and friends.
I still have to work on public holidays including Christmas which continues to have an impact on my personal life.
I feel strongly that employees who have to work outside the 'standard' Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm deserve financial compensation for the inconvenience they endure in relation to lost time with family and friends.

My weekends are important to me because they are a time to relax with family and friends especially now I have grandchildren.
Over the years my own children suffered because of my shift work and have expressed this to me.
They missed out on participating in sporting and recreational activities because of my shift work. At least by being compensated financially I was able to offer them other activities such as holidays to destinations we otherwise could not have afforded.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates. I feel as a society we need to maintain an emphasis on the sacrifices people make by giving their time to work outside 'regular' hours.
Most activities outside of work continue to occur in evenings and on weekends and therefore those working during these times should be compensated financially.

Submitted by
Anne Parish
Tuesday 25th of September 2012