

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 casual employee, working as a Registered Nurse, currently earning around \$40 per hour.

I have two daughters and work to boost the family income which comes primarily from agricultural activities.

If penalty rates were abolished I will not be able to continue to work as an RN in aged care. At present I have a 140k round trip to work, and am required to work a majority of afternoon shifts, many of these on the weekend. The penalty rates make missing out on family activities more bearable, because I know at least my dedication to my job is recognised by the extra money in my pay packet. I estimate my income will drop by 30% if penalty rates are removed. This is unacceptable, and I will not work these shifts without penalty rates. Nurses are increasingly under pressure and penalty rates are the

only thing that make night duty and afternoon shifts worth working as they are very disruptive to a normal family life.

My weekends are important to me because...I help my husband on the farm and attend school related activities. I am already required to work on weekends but penalty rates make weekend work more worthwhile. I have often missed out on family activities due to work commitments, but would not be prepared to do this without penalty rates.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates. Nurses are very badly payed as it is, if penalty rates are removed there will be a mass exodus from the profession. Nurses will not work shift work without penalty rates. As there is already a shortage of nurses, I predict this will escalate to crisis point if penalty rates are abolished.

Submitted by

R. Warden

Tuesday 25th of September 2012