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Committee Secretary

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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 RN, currently earning around 38 per hour.

I have 2 school-going children, my daughter is sick and requires medical attention. Having come to the country 10 years ago we are way behind our peers and hence have a mortgage and cars (second-hand) which need to be paid off.

If penalty rates were abolished... I would resign. I work night duty only because of the penalty rates. I get kicked, scratched, pinched, punched, bitten and verbally abused. I clean up faeces, vomit, urine and blood smeared over beds, walls, furniture, carpets.... etc. Hmmmm who else would put up with that for the love of the job? Any number of safe jobs will do - my kids work during the school holidays and get good money (stuff I could do). Night nurses are hard to find. GOOD nurses are hard to find.

My weekends are important to me because... my family is active and I am unalbe to support or enjoy their activities. I also miss out regularly on family weekend fun - they go to the rodeo, I stay home. They go New Year year after year, I stay home! They miss and need me but have to be understanding in as much the penalties give me the extra money we need to make ends meet. It's the only reason. We work unsociable hours which stresses the family. Abolishing the penalty means that you're inflicting the stress which breaks up families, marraiges and causes more financial stress. You're also abusing people who are essentially caring and giving people. It's just disrespectful and do you have no heart? I just want to resign now thinking about it.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates. As stated already, I work to live, not live to work - and if we're all honest about it, you are the same. For the sake of those beautiful, sad souls I care for, you need me. We are a caring industry, don't abuse what we give. It's not an easy job.

Submitted by
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