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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 machine operator, currently earning around 35 per hour.

I am the parent of a 21 year old uni student working casually in hospitality, reliant on penalty rates, . I am a single parent with a mortgage and also work in a job reliant on penalties.

I am a shift worker working a rotating roster of two 12 hour days, two 12 hour nights and four days off for a 24/7 manufacturer. My $35/hours is made up of a base rate to which penalties are added to compensate for working long hours, night shifts and weekends. Without penalties I would not want to do a job that leaves me feeling 'jet-lagged' and permanently tired, that takes away half my weekends, and damages my body from standing long hours on concrete floors and lifting heavy items (25kg+).

My weekends are important to me because the bulk of my family and friends work Monday to Friday. Thus, all chances to catch up with them and to attend special events are on weekends. To a degree you are socially isolated when you miss out on weekends as you miss so many events and 'friend time'.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates to ensure that family time remains important. So many of our population and politicians say they put family first - at least compensate a person forced to spend weekends away from their families. Most people working weekends have no choice in the matter - jobs are hard to find and employers have the upper hand, especially for casual staff (if they don't work weekends they don't receive shifts). Surely we elect our politicians to look after those of us without a voice in society - not to look after the money making entities we work for above their employees well being.

Submitted by
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