Committee Secretary

Senate Standing Committees on Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

PO Box 6100

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 permanent employee, working as a Correctional Officer, currently earning around $33.00 per hour.

I am a mother of two children under 5 and have a standard mortgage.

Penalty rates are paid because those of us that work on the weekends and 24/7 shift work sacrifice quality family time in order to do these hours. I have been a shift worker now for 8 years in that time i have worked more often then not on weekends. I have missed out on too many social events to mention and many important dates that are largely family days like long weekends, Chirstmas and easter to name a few. The reason I do this is for the money. It is unrealistic to think that in this industry there is the option to not do shift work because if that were an option I wouldn't work on weekends. It is unfair for someone to decide that my weekends are worth only the same as a

normal Monday to Friday. I personally would lose between 10 - 15k per annum if penalty are taken off us. This would leave me seriously behind the eight ball finacially and would most likely force me to find a second job to cover the expenses I currently have. But more importantly my family existence would be further diminished and that is grossly unfair for my children and for me.

The majority of my weekends I work on. The fact that this quality time is spent working I and every other person who has to work on weekends should be compensated accordingly.

I believe that penalty rates were awarded initially because it was deemed by the IRC or equivelant at the time as a fair and just compensation for the times worked. What has changed? People are still sacrificing there recreation time to keep 24/7 industries running. As a Prison officer I can not just do a 9-5 Monday - Friday shift. It doesn't exist. I agreed to do 24/7 shiftwork but it was also agreed that i would be compensated for it.

Submitted by
Vicki Stirling
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