Peter Cameron

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 Registered Nurse, currently earning around $36.00 per hour.

I have been a Nurse for 36 yrs, I work with adults with a Developmental Disability and Severe Challenging Behaviours in a Large Residential Centre. I have a grown family, but am supporting a son who is attending University. I have a mortgage. To some extent I plan my financial matters around my roster ie., I look at my roster & assess my approximate earnings & pay bills etc accordingly.

If penalty rates were abolished... To remove penalty rates will reduce not only my but every shift workers standard of living. I work a 7 day rotating roster which includes a mix of day, evening & night shifts & to remove penalty rates would reduce my income by between $20,000 to $30,000 per annum. I am nearing retirement age & my plan of

putting extra money into my superannuation will be severely jeopardised, thus causing me to become more dependant upon the Social Security system.

My weekends are important to me because...weekends, what are they? Being a shift worker I am lucky if I have 1 weekend off in 8 to 10 weeks. I have lost count of the number of special occasions/functions I have missed, my daughters ballet eisteddfods, my sons sporting events & family gatherings. Shift work interferes with friendships & social life.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates. If penalty rates are removed who will willingly work shift work? Penalty rates were introduced to compensate shift workers for the inconvenience & disruption to their lives from shift work. It will also create the need for shift workers to work or increase the level of overtime they work. Thus removing the worker more so from family & social life.

Submitted by
Peter Cameron
Saturday 29th of September 2012