Eli Candani

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 nurse, currently earning around 30 per hour.

I have been working as a nurse for the last 20 years. I was recently awarded a postgraduate degree in nursing and worked full-time through my full-time degree.I have 5 family members to support, 2 of which are disabled and elderly. I recently purchased a family house, and have a significantly large mortgage to pay off.

I currently work on weekends and 3 days during the week. This leaves 2 week days free for me to tend to household matters (bills, doctors' appointments etc...). If penalty rates were abolished I would be at a terrible financial loss, I would have to work every day to make up for the loss of income from penalty rates . Additionally, my elderly parents would not be able to receive the proper care they deserve. Unfortunately, I can not provide extra care through nurses and nursing homes even with current penalty

rates!. My children are also unable to assist in the matter due to the language barrier with their grandparents, as I did not have the financial means to enroll them in to an Italian weekend school.

Weekends and holidays are a fundamental part of our culture. It's a time to relax, have fun, recharge for the coming week and find a balance between, work and life!
Every weekend my friends and husband's family enjoy a lovely barbeque (if the weather is nice) or a family dinner (if the weather is bad), I have consistently missed these events for the last 5 years.
This year I missed my daughters birthday as I was working on the weekend!.
But I am working to make a better life for my fantastic family. I am working to provide them with essentials. I am working to buy and boost the economy, but I can not buy when I have nothing to spend.
If you believe we should be willing to give our weekend up for work, or to sacrifice something as important as a child's birthday over a weekend, then you should be willing to compensate financially for this sacrifice.
If penalty rates are unnecessary and weekends are meaningless, then 'working' days should be every day and office jobs should be all week. These institutes should be readily accessible every day of the week, so that we do not have to work on a weekend to get a 'week day' off to attend to daily essential tasks that can currently only be undertaken during week days.

Taking away penalty rates is like asking a student to choose between making money and getting an education, because most of us could barely afford it even with the penalty rates. It would be like asking low-middle income individuals to choose between having a life and having a job. Most research shows that a balance of the two is essential to health. Bad health will lead to spending more money to fix a national health crisis than was 'saved' during penalty rate abolition. A healthy Australia is a thriving

Australia. Do not destroy the future of this country. Do not take away penalty rates.

Submitted by

Eli Candani

Tuesday 9th of October 2012