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Submission to the Inquiry into the Fair Work Amendment (Small Business-Penalty Rates Exemption) Bill 2012

I am a casual employee, working as a English language teacher, currently earning around $46 per hour.

I have cerebral palsy, which limits my employment options. My husband is a shop assistant, so his pay is low. He has depression which impacts his employment options. We don't have children or a mortgage because we can't afford to.

If penalty rates were abolished my husband would lose the extra pay he receives for working Tuesday night. On our budget, every little bit counts - especially as the rent keeps going up. If penalty rates are abolished, the weekend becomes just another two days that people can be expected to work.

Weekends are important to me because they are times when most people are free to

get together for family gatherings, and cultural events. My husband and I regularly attend folk music festivals. These are almost entirely run by volunteers and make a great contribution to the community and could not happen if the weekend was not common recreation time. My mother also attends church each week. She is a widow and the church provides important social support. Churches would struggle to function without weekends. As the government is strongly dependent on the churches to provide many welfare support services, doing away with the set weekend could have devastating consequences for many people and throw responsibility for those services back on government.

I urge the committee to keep penalty rates and the set weekend. It helps society to function when people have some things they can count on. Some people need to work weekends and should be duly compensated for their sacrifice.

Submitted by
Jane Scott
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