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

The proposal to scrap penalty rates on the basis that the likes of Mr Xenophon thinks we live in a 24/7 world is a nonsense. Until I see businesses, offices, councils, public servants - including members of parliament - operating on weekends, public holidays or slugging it out on the night shift, then penalty rates must stay. (It is interesting to note that on the occasions when parliament does sit late into the night, it makes the next morning's news, as if to draw public sympathy).Penalty rates are an incentive and a compensation for those working to provide services during such hours to those who think they are living a 24/7 life but who take it as a given that they will spend their Christmas with their families, enjoy their weekends and public holidays free and work during civilised daylight hours.

I have a daughter who spends most weekends working in retail to help pay for her studies, and I am a registered nurse working in Aged Care, a sector whose employers will be most eager to embrace Mr Xenophon's proposal. Perhaps Mr Xenophon is

envisaging the business Utopia dreamed of by the likes of Gina Reinhardt. I urge you to consider the ramifications of this proposal for employees rather than regard only for the profits of business.

Submitted by
Diane Green
Saturday 29th of September 2012