Committee Secretary

Senate Standing Committees on Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

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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 Security Guard, currently earning around $18.38 per hour.

Fortunately my family has grown and I have paid my mortgage after a lifetime of work. I am currnetly trying to save something for retirement but the GFC has wiped out a large amount of my superannuation and some small investments as well. If you don't want me to be a burden on the "public purse" then let me earn money and live decently.

Security guards work for hourly rates between $17.50 and $18.38 in the ACT. This is one of the lowest base rates I know of. If you don't get penalty rates for night shift and weekend work you would be working unsociable hours with no reward and be placed in the "even lower socio-economic" group (approx$39000 p.a.) Penalty rates mean I can

pay my bills by earning (approx $52000 per year) Incidentally I have to work 12 hour shifts to earn this money.
My grandson has started working after school and on weekends and earns at a base rate of $6.70 per hour. The job is in the food services sector. What incentive is there for him to work weekends if he gets no penalty rates. Would the "guiding lights" of the Senate work on Sat or Sun for just $55.00 per day. Would they be more encouraged to participate if they were paid approx $80.00 per day? The customers purchasing goods from this company are not given a discount because the food was prepared by a younger, cheaper worker. The economy of this country does not discriminate between the poorer and better paid workers. We all pay the same prices. You can't take away peoples earning power without giving them lower prices in the market place otherwise you will create a new class of "working poor". Successive governments over the last hundred years have caved in to unions and pressure groups and granted these conditions now you have to "pay the piper". As for the argument that no penalty rates will increase job opportunities I say that the extra staff will be working for poor wages and the money saved will disappear into the employers coffers

"Do you Senators like to spend time with your friends and family?" I often work weekends and have to forgo family events and social gatherings with friends because I am rostered on shift work over the weekend.

I am including the text of an email I sent to Nick Xenophon in the last fortnight.
"It has been reported by United Voice that you are in favour of abolishing weekend penalty rates. Well I work as a Security Guard for a base rate of $18.38 per hour and I am sure you wouldnâ€™t even get out of bed for that sort of rate . I work rotating rosters which includes nights and weekends and Public Holidays. I am expected to do First Aid, be a Fire Warden and put up with the rudeness and arrogance of the Public

Service for this hourly pay rate. I am sure you are paid significantly more in your position to work unsociable hours and deal with unsociable people. The message is â€œ Leave the low paid people alone and allow them to live decentlyâ€•.

Submitted by
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