

Committee Secretary

Senate Standing Committees on Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

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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 38.41 per hour.

I am the main income earner for my family of 3. I have a mortgage. I would struggle to meet my financial commitments if this precedent were set, and the same removal of penalty rates inflicted on the Nurses' Award.

If penalty rates were abolished I would refuse to work weekends, evenings or night shifts. I would lose some hundreds of dollars (up to \$384.10 per weekend worked) in penalty rates and there would be no reason for me to work when my family is having their days/time off. I will not work these shifts without this incentive. If I worked every weekend (which I do not and would not, even with penalties) I could lose almost \$20,000 in income in one year. This incentive needs to be there for my colleagues to

do the weekends I already avoid working because my family time is so important.

My weekends are important to me because my family has their time off. I have limited time with my family as a shift worker and will not accept the removal of compensation for this. I often miss friends and family events due to working a 24/7 shift roster. I often miss out on events that I would like to attend as I have a responsibility to work a 24/7 shift roster. I will not miss these events without compensation.

This is of the utmost importance to me. I stand to lose thousands of dollars per year in lost income. I will leave nursing to pursue another career. I realise that there is no current talk of removing these penalty rates from nursing awards, but I suspect that it will follow soon after any precedent. I would rather pursue another career than take a pay cut in this manner.

I work "after hours" shifts only reluctantly out of a sense of responsibility to do my bit in the team, and BECAUSE I AM FINANCIALLY COMPENSATED. My spouse works and we send our daughter to day care while she is at work. In the interest of routine and regularity we send our daughter to day care even when I have days off. When I was working office hours I was privileged enough to have one day off each week to spend with my daughter when my wife was at work. Since returning to shift work this has not been possible. I will not work shift-work in the future if my financial compensation is removed. I already suffer from being a shift worker: insomnia, loss of family time, inability to attend friends and family functions, missing events that are of interest or importance to me and my family.

I utterly object to the setting of a precedent, and object entirely to this blatant exploitation of lower income earners.

This suggestion of removing penalty rates for ANYONE is a disgrace. I am even more offended by the suggestion that these penalty rates be removed from low income earner awards.

Not acceptable. I object.

Submitted by

Andrew Tracey-Smith

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