

**PE1531/H**

Public Petitions Committee  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

13 January 2015

Dear Convener

**Public Petition 1531**

I was able to attend your evidence session with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator today, as part of your scrutiny of the Petition seeking the removal of charitable status from independent schools. Please find herewith some additional information following today's session, in addition to the formal response made by us last month. We would be happy to answer any further questions the Committee may have, not least about the education that the range of independent schools actually provide. In addition, schools would be happy to meet the Committee - in session or on site - to explain more about the work they undertake.

Further to academic, learning support and extra-curricular work undertaken by the schools, there were several references in the Committee to the economic impact study of the sector that was produced last year. This was researched and written by BiGGAR Economics, an independent consultancy that has undertaken similar studies of several Scottish and international universities as well as other economic initiatives. I attach [a link to the report](#) herewith, compiled on the basis of figures accurate as of spring 2014.

As a result of the charity test, means-tested financial assistance from the schools is now in excess of £27 million per year. Although there are no exact figures as to the overall amount of non-domestic rates relief on schools, research undertaken by the Sunday Herald suggests that the impact is in the region of £4 million per year across the sector – far outweighed by the contributions schools make as a direct and conscious indication of the charitable status.

I would be happy discuss these, or any other related matters, should the occasion arise.

John Edward  
Director  
Scottish Council of Independent  
Schools