LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

CALL FOR VIEWS ON THE NON-DOMESTIC RATES (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM RORY GIBSON

The removal of charitable relief for independent schools will have a direct impact on the Scottish local authorities and all taxpayers in Scotland.

For any more increase in school fees will mean they will need to withdraw their child from school and they will need to be educated in a state school. The loss of just 1 in 30 (and it could very well be much more!) from the independent sector will cost the taxpayer more than anything gained from the rates.

In addition, the Scottish Government’s own Council of Economic Advisors has recognised the economic value of independent schools to Scotland. It would be naïve and counter-productive to add any barrier to Scotland’s ability to attract school age children from the rest of the UK, the EU and beyond. The Scottish independent schools are a business and this will put them at a serious disadvantage to other such businesses in the rest of the UK. Not only that by so doing it will cost the Scottish taxpayer more money.

The charity test has benefited all with independent schools giving access to local communities all of their facilities. Change their financial model and this too will be put at risk.