LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

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

SUBMISSION FROM GILLIAN STEWART

I wish to express my concern about the scare-mongering from the independent school sector regarding the proposed changes to eligibility to claim charitable relief from non-domestic rates. As set out in the Barclay report, there is no foundation for independent schools to receive this relief when it is not available to state schools. Independent schools benefit a very small percentage of the population (I believe around 6% in Scotland) and those who attend them gain numerous advantages, both in facilities while at school and in future status and earnings. It is not the place of the government, which should act for all the people of Scotland, to promote the privilege of a few. If people choose to send their children to private schools, it is not the place of government to subsidise them in doing so.

Please be aware that ‘information’ provided by the independent schools themselves on the drastic impact this change would have on them should be viewed with caution as it is likely to be biased. Objective sources of information should be sought instead, for example from you own excellent Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe).