LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

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

SUBMISSION FROM AMY DEY

For every child who has to leave an independent school in Scotland due to an increase in fees, there will clearly be added cost and strain on resources for local authorities, which has not been acknowledged.

Each one of the children removed from an independent school will be a direct cost to the taxpayer. An increase of class sizes, more pressure on already strained facilities and added pressure on teacher numbers will all contribute to a weakened state school system and a decimated Independent School sector. The Independent School sector in Scotland created £156 million in cost savings in 2015 to the state education sector associated with children who would otherwise have attended state schools.

The loss of 1 in 30 pupils from the independent sector, either to the state sector or boarding pupils locating elsewhere, would cost the Scottish taxpayer more than the entire rates increase proposed by the Bill. There is no reference of this at all in the Financial Memorandum.

The proposed removal of mandatory non-domestic rates relief from independent schools (c100 bodies have been singled out of c24,000 Scottish charities that receive automatic relief) makes no sense to the Scottish taxpayer and as such the Bill should not be passed.