LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

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

SUBMISSION FROM C CLAIRE GOODBRAND

I strongly disagree with the proposal to remove charitable status from private, fee-paying schools.

The additional cost (now speculated to be between roughly 6 – 11% increase in the next year) which would be incurred by parents of such schools should the charitable status be removed, would result in a significant number of children leaving the private school system. This would result in an incredible amount of additional cost and strain on resources for local authorities in order to educate such children in the state sector. This future burden on local authorities has not been acknowledged.

Each one of those children removed from an independent school will be a direct cost to the taxpayer. Swelling of class sizes, straining facilities and added pressure on teacher numbers will all contribute to a weakened state school system as well as a decimated Independent school sector. The Independent school sector created £156.0 million in cost savings in 2015 to the state education sector associated with children who would otherwise attend 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 all in the Financial Memorandum, which one Call for Evidence seeks views on.

I do not believe it would be beneficial to remove the mandatory non-domestic rates relief for independent schools either to the Scottish taxpayer nor to our state schools’ system.