LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

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

SUBMISSION FROM WILMA ROBERTS

The removal of eligibility to claim charitable relief from non domestic rates from mainstream independent schools is detrimental and discriminated against parents who "choose" to educate their children within the independent sector.

It is imperative that you consider the sacrifices many, many parents make to give their children the best education that they deem fit. Again, this is their choice and it is their choice to make these sacrifices.

Independent schools value the diversity of their student body and seek always to be schools that are at the heart of our community. The level of means tested support that they are able to offer through Bursaries is very important as is their ability to offer the use if their facilities to the wider community! These are both aspects that will impact greatly on independent schools operations.

It would seem that this government do not want people to have a "choice", that they intent on keeping people down! If that is not blatant discrimination then I do not know what is.

I do speak from being a parent of two girls who entered the state system, only to find that it sadly came nowhere near my expectations of an all round education. My choice was to send my girls to an independent school where they thrived, had a rounded education, went on to university and are stalwart members of society, working professionals, paying their taxes and living decent lives.

I am now retired and a grandmother watching my granddaughter following in her mother's footsteps, being educated in the independent sector and thriving. The education system in Scotland was the envy of the world at one time, sadly that is now not the case.

I would implore you to reconsider this removal very carefully.