LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

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

SUBMISSION FROM ANONYMOUS

Dear Committee Members,

Until a year ago my daughter was at the local state primary. She has learning difficulties and needs learning support but although the local state primary acknowledged that she needed the support they could not give it to her at that time as they did not have the budget and although they said she did definitely need extra support there were others in the state school more in need of their resources and there was nothing they could do at that stage.

So... we decided to use every last penny we could gather to send her to the local independent school where she gets really good learning support. In fact one fifth of her class at that private school gets learning support. One child has somebody with him at all times. The state is saving all this learning support money and there are hundreds if not thousands of children in private schools receiving learning and mental support that they are receiving through the independent sector at no cost to the state.

If the fees have to go up because you remove their charitable relief then we will not be able to afford the fees. Us and many others like us will have to put our children back into the state system and not only will the state have to find them spaces in already overcrowded schools and fund their education but also the state will have to fund so many expensive extra learning support staff. Many parents of children needing learning or mental support at private schools are not wealthy. They like us made the decision to move their children to get them the brilliant support they need.

I don't think you have even thought about where the new state places for these children will appear from or the huge cost involved. Or even the difficulties it will cause these fragile children to swap into a system where they may well not get support or a long delay for it, if at last they do. I would say that you will be causing huge upheaval for very little.

You are asking children in schools to not pick on the 'small guy'. Here you are picking on a tiny segment - the 50 or so independent schools who do amazing things supporting their pupils and nowadays really do earn their charitable status. I think this move to end charitable relief would end up having a negative social and economic impact once all these costs are taken into account. There are many other reasons this relief removal is unfair and does not make sense but I have focused on the one most personal to me.
I really hope that you rethink this through and reconsider.