LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

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

SUBMISSION FROM ANONYMOUS

Any decision to remove charitable status does not stand up to financial scrutiny and is merely an attempt to advance an ideological view that independent schools advance inequality – which is simply not the case. In an ideal world independent schools would not be required but we do not live in an ideal world and parents that do choose to send their children to be educated independently should not be punished for doing so.

If fees where to rise, even nominally, it could be enough to push some families (including mine) into making the difficult decision to remove their children from the independent schools. This financial pressure would also hit larger families of 3 or more children even more. We know, as does the Committee, that state schools are over-subscribed. Can Edinburgh City Council confirm that they would be able to place significant amounts of children coming from independent schools.

From the figures, it costs local government £6,500 per annum to educate one pupil. In an independent school which may have to pay an additional £500,000 in non-domestic rates it would only take 78 pupils to move into the state sector to cancel out any “supposed” financial advantage to local government. That is a few as 30 families moving to the state sector and is not, in anyway conceivable if they are facing 3 or 4 sets of fee increases.

More children moving into the state sector will, in real terms, cost the local government considerably more than would be generated by removing charitable status. In reality, we know that the amount generated will be nowhere near enough to cover the additional costs, with a strong likelihood that standards and facilities will be adversely impacted for all.

In independent schools were to lose their charitable status then they would not be subject to the vigorous oversight that they currently enjoy nor would the be under any obligation to make facilities available to the local community or provide bursaries. Everyone would lose out.

The proposals make no sense for a financial, social or education perspective at all.