LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

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

SUBMISSION FROM ANONYMOUS

I am appalled by this bill, which I consider to be unfair and narrow minded. It appears to be a populist response to an issue that is actually much more complex than it appears.

I declare an interest as the parent of 2 daughters who attend an independent school. One of my daughters was extremely unhappy in mainstream schooling, and the independent school provides a nurturing and supportive environment for her; the other followed her there in the interests of fairness. The school has been fantastic for both girls and as a family we are very grateful for the opportunity that they have been given.

We are a typical middle income family- my husband and I both work in the public sector, and based on our income, this type of school would not be an option for us. We receive a small bursary for each girl, and members of our family have assisted us with the fees. We realise that are fortunate to be in this position, but we also make a lot of sacrifices as a family (in the immediate and wider sense) to be able to afford this kind of education. We already pay taxes which fund places for our daughters in the state sector, which we have given up (to the benefit of other children). A further increase in fees, based on this Bill, would be grossly unfair.

It is surely a healthier education system that provides different options, at costs that are not prohibitive to all but the most wealthy. One size does not fit all. Some children will not ever thrive in mainstream state education. Some will not have the option to opt out but that is surely not a reason to make it even more difficult for those who at a push, can.

Independent education should be made more, not less accessible. This would be a real benefit across both state and independent facets of the Scottish Education system.

Please let us be aspirational in our ambitions for the education of our children in Scotland and cherish our independent schools and the advantages they bring.