LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

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

SUBMISSION FROM ANONYMOUS

One of the biggest concerns re. these proposals to remove the mandatory non-domestic rates relief from independent schools, is that every child forced to leave our independent schools due to higher fees, will put further strain on the already overburdened state school system and local authorities. I have first-hand experience of these pressures with one child at an independent (ESMS) and one at local authority school, which is already underfunded and under resourced. Class sizes will inevitably swell, straining facilities and deepening the teacher shortage crisis. These proposals could also potentially decimate the independent school sector – a sector for which Edinburgh and, indeed Scotland, is very highly regarded. The Scottish independent school sector created £156m in cost savings in 2015 to the state education sector, through children who would otherwise have attended state school.

Every child removed from an independent school will be a direct cost to the Scottish tax payer. Why single out the 56 independent schools out of approximately 24,500 Scottish charities that receive automatic relief? The loss of 1 in 30 pupils from the independent schools sector, either to the state system or boarding pupil locating elsewhere, would cost the Scottish taxpayer more than the entire rates increase proposed by the bill.

The biggest cost will ultimately be to Scotland’s children, who will suffered in both the state and independent schools if these proposals were to be approved.