

Dear Madam/Sir,

RE: Productivity Commission 'Future foundations for giving' draft report

I have read the draft report. While I appreciate its effort to be fair and produce the greatest good for Australia through government funding, I am concerned about the possible consequences if giving for non-government primary, secondary, childcare, aged care and other religious organizations loses deductible gift recipient (DGR) status.

Currently I chair a committee of Christian people who are endeavoring to provide special religious education (SRE) for over 1000 students in local government primary and secondary schools. In this context, I and the committee regularly talk with the teachers we support (both paid and volunteer) about student needs and life difficulties, and their responses to teachers. Their responses collectively show that SRE classes are providing a good deal of hope, life meaning and social-emotional wellbeing for many students and some of their parents. Such wellbeing contributes to broader community wellbeing.

A number of generous community members help us substantially in financing our operation. Removing DGR status for their giving is a disincentive to give. Further, the message of this potential removal seems to be that government policy devalues the contribution of SRE and more broadly the contribution of faith communities to Australian society.

I feel that the proposed changes to DGR status need to be reconsidered and withdrawn in the interests of social justice and student and community wellbeing.

Yours Sincerely

Barry Hill