

2nd submission to productivity commission for philanthropy

This is my 2nd submission

I note the report claims that “religious education in public schools” confers a private benefit to donors – and I would like to state this claim is baseless. I have been a donor to such DGR entities and I receive no benefit.

As for religions which are NSW Special Religious Education providers – in 2011 a competitor for non-religious content for parents/carers who object to their child receiving special religious education was established. This provider of Special Education in Ethics is now called Primary Ethics Ltd who now have DGR status for donations. In my experience over the years since 2011 when ethics classes were first established – pretty well all the teachers of these classes are parents or grandparents of children who participate in such ethics classes and likely are the donors too – only once have I seen a non-parent teacher (and read in paper of another non-parent teacher) of these “ethics” classes where donations are tax-deductible. The Productivity Commission has no basis to claim that the donors to religious SRE providers secure a benefit and to claim there is no general community benefit. And it is inconsistent to note that the competitor to SRE being Primary Ethics donors are parents/grandparents of children in these classes so are securing a private benefit.

A Charity non-profit provides services to the public at large and so the public may or may not include a family member of the donor. Eg a donor to a cultural organisation may receive a benefit in that the cultural organisation exists and engages in its cultural activity eg a donor may visit their local art gallery which has DGR status and so receive a benefit. So for Productivity Commission to isolate “religious education in public schools” as conferring a private benefit on donors seems to be discriminatory against religious education which is on offer to every child whose parent/carer allows.

As for other DGR entities conferring private benefit to donors – how is it that Productivity Commission has ignored:

- (i) that cultural organisations such as major state art galleries with DGR status often give to donors (who get tax deductible receipt) free exhibition tickets or free invites to social events.
- (ii) As for proposal for every non-profit is to get DGR status eg local soccer club – then parents of children in the soccer club will benefit.

There is no legitimate reason to deny “religious education in public schools” DGR status.

Nor “building funds for private schools” which would like to make their facilities available for non-profit uses but in NSW are impeded by state laws which demand use only for educational purposes.

Perhaps if DGR funds used to build a building then Federal Government can ban NSW government from restricting other non-profits from using the space – as federal government laws should take precedence where there is an inconsistent NSW law.

Again – the state should not have right to remove leaders of any religious organisation. There should be a separation of “church and state”.