

17th January 2024

Karen Godfrey
Australian Government Productivity Commission
GPO Box 1428
Canberra City ACT 2601, Australia

RE: Philanthropy – Public Inquiry, Future foundations for giving

Dear Karen,

I wish to make a submission to the public inquiry into Philanthropy – Future Foundations for Giving.

For context I live in Tasmania, and I am a father of 4 kids, (my eldest has just graduated year 12 with a very high ATAR score (proud dad moment!). All my kids are attending a non-government, faith-based school. We are a single income household, and my wife & I have invested heavily into the education of our children to provide them a solid foundation for life.

There are 2 points to my submission.

1. One of the main reasons we chose to send our children to a private school is because of the additional facilities offered and I am extremely concerned that removing the DGR status for non-government primary, secondary, childcare, aged care, and other religious organisations will result in these institutions needing to pass on the increased costs for their facilities onto the parents in the form of increased fees. To remove the tax benefit for donating to a school or similar will obviously reduce the amount that entity receives in funding from their donors. This will result in that funding gap needing to be filled by other means, which would generally be in the form of increased fees (very likely) and/ or reduced services. The current cost of living crisis, (not helped by government of whatever colour), is creating unprecedented stress on household budgets, and forcing families to make the difficult choice to take their children out of the private education sector and back into the underfunded, overcrowded government schools is simply a shortsighted idea and will create further budget pressure on the government.
2. Extending the DGR status to include charities that advocate for animal protection, is a fantastic idea and should be encouraged. What MUST be ensured, is that any organisation that condones, encourages, or promotes illegal activity such as trespass, criminal damage, destruction of property, or actions that prevent honest, hardworking taxpayers from their lawful business do not receive any government funding or charity status at all.

Please do consider the above points, I am very worried about the impact that the proposed changes will have on the private school sector, and I am sure we are not the only family that will be impacted.

Yours Sincerely,

Simon Best