

Brief comments received (400 to 599)

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400	My donation to Scripture Union and similar organisations helps to ensure at least some form of moral education and compassionate care to those who are struggling. Scripture Union camps, as an example provide free, safe havens for children, especially those from backgrounds with domestic violence. They provide a period of time when children can be children
401	Dear Commissioners, I have received important issues regarding Aus.Deductible Gift (DGR) systems. I am completely shocked. You do not seem to realise the harm to certain charitable organisations including Scripture Union NSW. Haven't the (DGR) looked carefully at the good fundraising of the resources Scripture Union has and is doing, that benefit our children and society for good. Taking away their (DGR) Status is to have less input in our schools like religious/education including (SUNSW lunch time groups) I see 10,000 volunteers who teach Religious Education in our Government Schools, has long been recognised and proven by well-researched wellbeing benefits and is vital for promoting social cohesion. Please reconsider your decisions and don't get rid of good working needs our society needs to continue for the good of all Australians.
402	We believe that Scripture Teaching must be allowed in schools. Children need this as part of thei They probably don't receive this education. at home. Brian & Rose Freeman
403	Here we go again! Another attack on Christianity and further denial of the benefits that Christian organisations bring to promote societal cohesion. The benefit of SRE for participants and volunteers is well researched and proven. There is a high percentage of Australians who claim religious belief but the Government is increasingly anti in supporting them, their views and contributions.
404	DGR Status for scripture in schools and religious organisations that provide education and school camp and holiday activities should be retained. I personally have benefited from these have have many members of my family. I am one of the 10,000 volunteers who teach scripture in schools. I've been teaching it for 25 years, and have seen the incredible benefits gained by children and teachers of Christian instruction in schools. Your goal seems to be to eliminate any charitable organisation, apart from ones which provide alleviation of poverty on the basis of the value of equity. I regard your elimination of all religious education and schools and organisations that provide holiday camps and school camps, such as Scripture Union it's highly discriminatory. By all means, remove the tax deduction from wealthy private schools for their building funds, but don't remove the tax deductible status from ordinary people who wish to have religious education in public schools or through the provision of religious schools in the wider community.

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405	Dear Sir Scripture Union has been involved in Schools for many years and had been life changing for young people who have been in need of a mentor. Children need a hope in a world that offers no hope and SU and scripture class offer that. Scripture teachers are the largest number of volunteers in NSW and how many votes will you lose Beware of doing this could cost you more than you think
406	These tax deductible funds should not be changed. Schools and other charities desperately need this to survive. DO NOT CHANGE THIS>
407	To The Commissioners, My name is Lennard J Davies and I have just been made aware of your "Draft Report" to take the D.G.R. status away from the religious education Charities such as the Scripture Union Organization. I believe this to be a backward step, as the S U has and does help thousands of school Children through their lunch-time activities. Also the many camps that they and other religious organizations run to help our youth in this troubled world we now find ourselves in, is invaluable to the upbringing and general mental health. I am not sure if you are aware that the religious groups are by far the biggest group of weekly volunteers that we have in Australia on a weekly basis. therefore to withdraw their DGR status would have a detrimental effect on today's society. Surely, as a government and society we should be encouraging more people to volunteer not less. Please recognize the tremendous work of these wonderful people, they certainly had an impact on myself and our children. I therefore urge you to reconsider removing their DGR, so that it can be retained. thankyou, respectfully yours, Len.
408	I am quite concerned about the proposed legislation. Faith based groups support a broad spectrum of societal endeavours. The proposal to remove DGR status for school building funds and scripture teaching in government schools is discriminatory & unfair. Scripture teachers play an important role in the lives of school students and their role should be recognised and supported. Funding for school buildings likewise leaves an important legacy. The legislation appears to target Christian organisations and this is manifestly unfair!
409	There seems an irony in the Productivity Commission's brief to 'analyse motivations for philanthropic giving in Australia and identify opportunities to grow it further' to then recommend the removal of DGR status to 'provide religious education in government school'. In 'The Conversation' Krystian Seibert quoted the Hewlett Foundation's research that "a majority of donors make giving decisions based on factors like loyalty, personal connections, and faith-based commitments." It is the 'faith based commitment' that drives much philanthropic giving to religious education and school building funds. The majority of such giving is not based on tax deductibility but a desire to benefit the wider community. What tax deductibility encourages is giving a larger amount to leverage that tax advantage. If the Commission is serious about identifying opportunities to grow philanthropy then cutting DGR status seems to be counter-productive.
410	Dear Commissioners, I am a parent who has had 3 children attend Government schools. I am a retired teacher who has worked all my life in Government schools. I have appreciated greatly the work of the Special Religious Education (SRE) in those schools. I have witnessed the impact of Chaplains and SRE teachers working with staff and students in the management of grief and stress, to empathise with them, calm their emotions and offer support. Sometimes that support is ongoing, welcomed by principals and staff because of stretched resources with their own teaching staff. These Scripture Union volunteers are a vital part of our schools ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. I appreciate your idea to expand the system to cover more initiatives, like animal welfare. However, to achieve this you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in RE and lunchtime groups (SUPA clubs and ISCF). Australia is a multicultural nation with approximately 60% of its inhabitants identifying with a religion. But it seems that your report is based on an ideology that religion has no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through Religion Education (RE) in schools. Putting extra pressure on RE and its teachers is definitely not a quality decision for our country and will have long-term ramifications, both for schools and society in general. The RE teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. On one hand, you are

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	<p>stating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, but on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge chunk of the people who will help you (and are now helping) to achieve that goal! According to the report, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector - which tells us that this is what our communities want AND are currently using. In short, you are penalising both the fastest growing sector of education (mainly funded by ordinary people), and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. As such, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little "community-wide benefit" and would encourage you, even if you don't have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology. This will damage a multicultural Australia as a result.</p>
411	<p>As chairperson of the Lithgow Christian Education Association Sub-Committee, LCEA, I write to express my profound disappointment at the Productivity Commission's draft report, Future Foundations For Giving, in which it is recommended the removal of the Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) for giving to religious education in schools. Should the Labor government consider adopting this recommendation, considerable pushback can be anticipated. For over 20 years the LCEA has raised funds to employ a Special Religious Education(SRE) teacher at Lithgow High School, 2 days per week, currently at 1 day per fortnight due to a deficit in funding. This service has been appreciated by the school, its parents and pupils. Why the Labor Government would contemplate creating an impediment to philanthropic giving, to charities, not-for-profits and community groups, is perplexing. Surely, it's in the government's interest to promote and incentivise philanthropic giving, by affording tax deductibility. Unless this tax-deductibility concession is being gamed, rorted, abused or misused, to legislate its removal, would surely prove counterproductive and counterintuitive. Why precipitate a political maelstrom and have to placate a host of hostile faith communities with a general election on the horizon? Should this contentious recommendation prove to be a cynical fait accompli, the Labor government had better have carried out a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis and be able to present compelling reasons for such a move. Hopefully, the Labor government is prepared to "stump up" and compensate for the inevitable shortfall in funding that will inevitably result from the withdrawal of philanthropic giving to reputable charities and not-for-profits apart from faith institutions of all persuasions. This year the LCEA was going to undertake a donor drive to try and increase giving from the Lithgow Church congregation to again fund the SRE teacher 1 day per week. With the cost of living pressure and a less than robust economic situation, sadly this goal may not be realised. With LHS having applied for the Government to fund a school chaplain, it seems conspicuously anomalous situation that our funding to employ an SRE teacher is potentially eroded by the withdrawal of tax deductibility. (It could be expected that productive interaction and networking would occur between the school chaplain and SRE teacher.) It is our plea that LCEA, our donors and church providers, along with all faith institutions, charities, not-for-profits and community groups that the government will not adopt the draft recommendation proposed by the Productivity Commission.</p>
412	<p>Dear Commissioners, As the 2024 school year is set to begin, I, along with many other teachers are looking forward to returning to the classroom to inspire, encourage, equip and train a generation of leaders, workers, thinkers and carers as they emerge into roles of influence and importance within our free society. I volunteer as a Special Religious Education teacher and play a valued role within the public education of students in the local high school where my own children have and continue to attend. I value the resources, expertise and training that I receive through external organisations such as Scripture Union NSW and others that ensure that the content and the quality of delivery within the classroom are of a professional and excellent standard. These programs are not only recognised by many families as a valuable and crucial part of their child's education, the benefits can be tested and proven. To withdraw DGR status from organisations and programs that are clearly valued by those who contribute towards them generously and regularly is short-sighted and discriminatory. Please preserve and better enable that which parents and children are choosing as good and right inclusions to their education and ensure that this programs are offered with the highest standards possible.</p>

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413	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union’s ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government’s goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don’t have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result.</p>
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415	<p>Dear Commisioners, I read with dismay that you are considering removing DGR status from some charities and religious institutions including Scripture Union which I support. This has the appearance of an attack on Religious organisations in this country many of which positively support young people to become productive and positive</p>

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	citizens of this nation. Such organisations are very reliant on the everyday citizens who contribute to them with the goal of making a real contribution to our next generation and society. I would be heartened to see that our government supports such goals rather than undermining them. I support such charities for animal welfare [regular giver to the RSPCA] but surely human welfare should be paramount.
416	I have recently been informed that charities that provide religious education in government schools, including Scripture Union lunchtime groups are to have their DGR status withdrawn. I wish to protest at this decision in the strongest possible way. Personally, religious education at school has been a major influence in my life. I tried to pass on this benefit to others by becoming Scripture teacher in a state NSW school myself. At a time when youth suicide rates are sky rocketing it is more than ever important to try to restore a sense of meaning in young people's lives. Please reconsider this decision.
417	It is vital that schools continue to provide some Christian input into their students' lives. It is voluntary, not enforced, but they are exposed to so much outside schools that is subversive of good, moral and virtuous behaviour, that this needs to be counterbalanced.
418	I do NOT support the removal of tax deductions for donations made to religious charities to support SRE in this current federal Productivity Commission report. If this was to be implemented it would negatively impact the current SRE program in schools. SRE has been found to delivers key psychological benefits to students, it promotes thick multiculturalism and social acceptance, and reduces the risk of student radicalisation. In a time when our schools are struggling to support the huge number of students with mental health issues and loneliness is at an all time high, a targeted policy to reduce the effectiveness of a program that promotes wellbeing, friendships and belonging is a ridiculous move. Finally as one who works in the community engagement field with volunteers I am keen to keep SRE functioning well as there is clear evidence that people of faith are 25% more likely than their secular counterparts to donate money and 23% more likely to volunteer time.
419	I am very upset that this government will propose a reform of such nature to deprive the Christian community of the funds that are dependent on these donations and tax relief. For years the present system has worked well and I strongly oppose this proposed scheme by this government which has displayed no common sense at all
420	Dear Commissioners, I am writing in dismay at your recommendation to remove the DGR system from religious education in public schools. You also recommend removal of DGR from building funds for faith based schools. This is the fastest growing sector in education. Our country has a rich Christian heritage that has made this country a place of freedom & peace. Teaching children the Christian faith, of loving one another as yourself & forgiveness has life long benefits for them & our society even if they don't take up a personal faith, it gives guidelines of how to live. So please reconsider this recommendation & maintain, even increase support as this will benefit the health & well being of many children for life.
421	Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry programs. I'm really concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. I'm glad you're considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. But removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, doesn't seem like a good way forward. It will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Having lived in the Middle East for 18 years, I've come to really appreciate the richness that cultural backgrounds bring to a country. Approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion as part of their cultural heritage. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools. Putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are

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	<p>articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you're proposal penalises both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and puts undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I know that Australia has a strong history so far, and when I see how good our country has been for its immigrants when compared worldwide, I think you and I can do a lot better than this. I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don't have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result. Thanks for your ongoing work and I look forward to seeing an improved proposal that maintains DGR status for religious charities.</p>
422	<p>Dear Commissioners, I would like to oppose the reform to have SRE organisations withdrawn from the DGR system. While it is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare, to achieve this you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Quiz Worx and Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Special Religious Education is a vital part of children's holistic growth not to mention it has the largest weekly volunteer labour force in Australia to enable SRE to happen. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools - putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long- term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don't have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result. Thank you for your time. Larissa</p>
423	<p>To the Commission, I have taught Special Religious Education in NSW as a volunteer for many years. This has been very rewarding for me and I feel it has been rewarding for the children in the classes i have taught to be able to ask questions and learn about the faith that our democracy has been built upon. Lunchtime groups run in schools by Scripture Union volunteers impact 1,000's of students weekly, often providing meals eg. breakfast clubs. The draft report and reforms to the DGR system are concerning. If DGR status is removed from organisations like Scripture Union NSW, the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and special (eg. breakfast or lunch groups) will be significantly affected. Religious education in schools is of huge community-wide benefit as children are taught about putting others before themselves and caring and loving others through the religious instruction they receive. As a society we need to encourage this rather than the 'me first' attitudes that children see through advertising, social media and TV shows. Religious education in schools gives children a chance to hear about particular faiths and enquire more if they are interested. Statistics indicate that Religious Education teachers represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. Please do not remove the government</p>

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	<p>assistance that helps faith communities because in the end it is the faith communities that help the government provide much needed care for others and not just within faith communities but within the wider community . It also appears that school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector so why make it harder for schools to accomodate more students or offer better facilities? As a Christian I support many charities that benefit the whole community, and as a person who valued my Scripture teachers as a student and am thankful for the time they gave up each week to teach me, I would need to consider redirecting my volunteer time and money that supports NFP's, and give more to fund Scripture teaching if the Government goes ahead with this plan to take money away from religious charities by getting rid of tax benefits. Even if whoever is reading this doesn't have a religious belief themselves, this plan feels very discriminatory against religious organisations which I know is something the government does not want to appear to be - discriminating. Please reconsider and assess the value of Special Religious education through organisations such as Scripture Union NSW, and faith based private schools and their building programs, so they can continue to teach the Governments curriculum, and nurture and care for students as they learn.</p>
424	<p>Dear Commissioners Thankyou for taking the time to review the Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) system. My concern is that the draft report recommends that charities that have DGR status to provide religious education in government schools are to have their DGR status withdrawn. As a former teacher of Special Religious Education (SRE) for 19 years in government schools I appreciate the place and impact of SRE. I have seen firsthand the positive impact of SRE upon students and families. Students have become more aware of others and their beliefs and have engaged in discussions about how to treat others with respect, along with concrete actions they might take in this area of life. I have personally known and supported SRE teachers who have taken the role of an SRE teacher as their employment and have seen the positive impact they have had on individuals and indeed whole schools. I believe it is in the best interests of our communities to continue to make the teaching of SRE as easy as possible in our government schools. For this reason I would like the DGR status of those organisations providing religious education in government schools to have their DGR status maintained.</p>
425	<p>A recommendation was made by the ACNC to strip religious groups of DGR status. I strongly disagree and I honestly don't even think it will work, they will simply declare that they achieved no profit and after expenses simply donate everything to other charities, which they do already anyways. I get that people are angry with the churches but can we please stop these ideological and malicious attacks. It's kinda getting old.</p>
426	<p>I think it would be a huge shame if scripture in schools(SIS) lost funding simply because their affiliated religious institutions lost their DGR! Regardless of your child's faith the SIS really helps with morality and a sense of identity. There is so much work that places like Scripture Union do, it doesn't make sense to remove their taxing rights. Keep religious places on the DGR!</p>
427	<p>Dear Commissioners, It has been brought to my attention that certain charitable organisations, including Scripture Union NSW, are likely to have their tax-deductible status for donations revoked due to a recent suggested review. You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, providing support to around 2,000 students weekly. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. However I am concerned that, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is a very multicultural nation, where approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. As a mainstream teacher, I highly value the support offered by the presence of groups such as</p>

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	<p>Scripture Union in schools, given the high teacher shortage leading to high pressure environments. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don't have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result.</p>
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429	<p>I am concerned that the Commission is looking at taking away the tax incentives which support faith based education. Such a move would indicate the Govt sees no value in people having a faith, as distinct from other types of education. This is discriminatory. That faith based education has the largest weekly volunteer force in Aust is indicative of the value to Aust society</p>
430	<p>Dear Commissioner, Private school building funds are building inequity - funded by the Australian Government through DGR. The disparity between resources from the state and private system is growing, and with the only feasible alternative for new state infrastructure in urban areas being vertical schools, accelerating the inequity. However, support of SRE is building social cohesion. In a secular democracy, SRE fosters from Kindergarten that 'Aussies' come from different faith backgrounds - yet we can still be mates in the classroom, on the sporting field etc. Historically, Christian Faithgroups have been the main recipients of DGR support, but increasingly other</p>

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	<p>faithgroups are accessing the available DGR support - including Islamic, Jewish and Hindu SRE. The following research paper will be helpful for the commission to see SRE as pivotal to the success of a secular democracy, and worth continued government support via DGR. https://ccd.sydneycatholic.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/SRE-executive-summary-Nov2018.pdf Many thanks, John Chappell St John's North Ryde Anglican Church</p>
431	<p>Dear Commissioners, I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result.</p>
432	<p>Dear Commissioners, Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry programs. I am very concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good to consider expanding the system to cover more initiatives. However, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Are you aware that approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion? Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. Did you know that Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers? In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a very large proportion of the people who are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? You are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens. I want DGR status to be maintained for religious education in government schools. I want to see volunteers within the faith communities recognised within the DGR system to support the community-wide benefits that faith communities bring. I ask the government to maintain or increase their support for this, not reduce it.</p>
433	<p>I am writing to express my deep concern that you are considering removing the DGR status of religious charities like Scripture Union NSW. Such a move will deeply impact the ability of Australians to access religious education in school and lunch time groups. I deeply hope that you will reconsider your current proposal and believe that the religious education they provide are of significant community benefit.</p>

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434	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don't have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result.</p>
435	<p>I was brought up to have a responsibility towards people who have had fewer opportunities in life and therefore donate to worthy causes that support the development of individuals who have had fewer social and economic opportunities in life</p>
436	<p>I am disappointed to hear the government is considering changing the rules to deductible giving to not for profit organisations that promote religious/ Christian education in our school education system. I have been very fortunate to see the benefits of this type of religious education and am embarrassed to think that our once Christian country is now trying to dissuade the giving opportunities that help promote and endorse our basic fundamentals for ethical values and living in our multicultural society.</p>
437	<p>The work undertaken by Scripture Union and other SRE educators is extremely important to children. To take the tax free status from this work would deprive the children from the help that SRE provides.</p>
438	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry programs. They operate in many schools with diverse student populations, including indigenous Christians. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, if you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people</p>

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	<p>who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So please don't make it harder for this to happen successfully. In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I urge you to review this policy before withdrawing the DGR status for Scripture Union and other Christian initiatives. I encourage you, to reflect and understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result. Thank you for considering my submission.</p>
439	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. I was directly affected by the equal opportunity to access SUNSW programs in schools. It has led to a multitude of personal benefits including a strong social connection, a deep personal faith, and an interest in providing education for others. I am now a teacher in a school largely because of the freedoms that I enjoyed as a student. I wholeheartedly support this option remaining a viable and sustainable opportunity for others. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little "community-wide benefit" and would encourage you, even if you don't have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result.</p>
440	<p>Dear Sir/Madam I am writing about the recent draft to consider a change in the DGR status for religious education and school building funds donations. I am a mother with 2 sons in highschool and I am also a Christian. I donate regularly to the school building funds and also the scripture teaching organisation that supports scripture teachers at our local area. I appreciate the system of DGR for these financial contributions that i make. But i appreciate more so the opportunity for religious education to be supported in our public school system. It is a loss to our society when religious education is no longer valued, because it adds so much richness to our multicultural, multi-ethnic society. I feel the Government should be supporting these insitutions/organisations rather than taking away from them. There is great benefits that faith communities bring to our society. I belong to a Presbyterian church and i see the sense of community and care that is expressed each week and i see newcomers who see this is something special in the faith community. I think this is something that should be valued in our increasingly isolating society. Thank you for your time and consideration of this important issue</p>

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441	<p>Dear Commissioners, I wish to address the impact of the draft report and proposed reforms to the DGR (Deductible Gift Recipient) system on the valuable work carried out by Scripture Union NSW in Government Schools. As you may be aware, Scripture Union NSW conducts lunchtime groups in these schools, directly benefiting approximately 2,000 students on a weekly basis. These groups play a crucial role in Scripture Union's ministry programs. My deep concern lies in the potential consequences of expanding the DGR system to cover additional initiatives, such as animal welfare, while simultaneously removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW. This decision could have a profound and negative effect on the well-being and spiritual education of both current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia prides itself on being the most multicultural nation, with around 60% of its population identifying with a religion. However, the draft report appears to be founded on an ideology that downplays the societal benefits of religion. Extensive research indicates that one of the most effective ways to foster social cohesion is through religious education in schools. Placing additional burdens on this form of education and its dedicated teachers does not align with the best interests of Australia and may have long-lasting repercussions. Religious Education teachers in Australia constitute the largest group of weekly volunteers in the country. While the government aims to double financial and volunteering contributions by 2030, the proposed removal of privileges and support from faith communities, which represent a significant portion of these volunteers, appears counterproductive. This decision does not seem in line with the broader goal of increasing community engagement and support. Furthermore, the removal of DGR status from school building funds is concerning. Faith-based education represents the fastest-growing education sector in Australia, reflecting the desires and choices of our communities. It is puzzling why barriers would be erected that make it more challenging for this sector to thrive and succeed. In summary, these proposed changes seem to penalize the fastest-growing education sector, primarily supported by private citizens, and place undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia. Such actions may risk diminishing social cohesion within our society. I believe that there is an opportunity for a more balanced and thoughtful approach to these initiatives. In light of the arguments presented above, I reject the assumption that these initiatives have little "community-wide benefit." I urge you to reconsider the potential discriminatory and minimizing aspects of your current ideology, recognizing the broader impact on a diverse and multicultural Australia. Sincerely, William Hood</p>
442	<p>Dear Commissioners, Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, however to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. You have expressed the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, yet you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is a counterproductive decision. Furthermore, you plan to remove the DGR status from school building funds. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. Your proposal makes it harder for this to happen and be successful. Again, counter productive. In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think the Australian people deserve better than this. Your presumption that these initiatives are of little "community-wide benefit" is clearly misguided,</p>

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	and I would encourage you, even if you don't have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result.
443	I am proud of the community-wide benefits that faith communities bring Please consider maintaining or increasing support for SRE, not reduce it. DGR status should be maintained for religious education in government schools. I can't see why volunteers within the faith communities can't be recognised within the DGR system.
444	I understand the Commission is considering recommending the removal of DGR status from faith based organisations who operate within schools in areas such as providing Special Religious Education (SRE) in NSW. I would urge the Commission against doing this. This organisations provide much needed assistance to volunteers across many faiths and help to grow a sense of community within schools. Withdrawing DGR status will lead to less resourced volunteers and schools that are less connected to their local community. These organisations help to maintain standards of proficiency and child safety which help schools have confidence of having faith based programs and volunteers on site.
445	To the Productivity commission, In light of the current reports by the productivity commission to remove the deductible gift recipient status for giving to religious education in state schools I'd like to make the below comments. SRE/CRI programs in government schools have proven student wellbeing benefits and contribute positively to the school community There is an intrinsic link between formative religious instruction in childhood years and religious service in adult years, and the community-wide benefits of this Christian service The removal of DGR status for giving to religious instruction in government schools will significantly impact organisations responsible for the delivery of quality SRE/CRI programs My giving as is motivated purely by my faith and not motivate by any financial benefits. It is mandated in the New South Wales state constitution that all schools in NSW must provide an option for Scripture education which is primarily funded via private philanthropic giving. The removal of such status will greatly impact the ability of these organisations to deliver these services. It is my hope that the federal government sees the benefit religious education provides to our youth and society as a whole
446	To the Productivity commission, In light of the current reports by the productivity commission to remove the deductible gift recipient status for giving to religious education in state schools I'd like to make the below comments. SRE/CRI programs in government schools have proven student wellbeing benefits and contribute positively to the school community There is an intrinsic link between formative religious instruction in childhood years and religious service in adult years, and the community-wide benefits of this Christian service The removal of DGR status for giving to religious instruction in government schools will significantly impact organisations responsible for the delivery of quality SRE/CRI programs My giving as is motivated purely by my faith and not motivate by any financial benefits. It is mandated in the New South Wales state constitution that all schools in NSW must provide an option for Scripture education which is primarily funded via private philanthropic giving. The removal of such status will greatly impact the ability of these organisations to deliver these services. It is my hope that the federal government sees the benefit religious education provides to our youth and society as a whole.
447	To the Productivity commission, In light of the current reports by the productivity commission to remove the deductible gift recipient status for giving to religious education in state schools I'd like to make the below comments. SRE/CRI programs in government schools have proven student wellbeing benefits and contribute positively to the school community There is an intrinsic link between formative religious instruction in childhood years and religious service in adult years, and the community-wide benefits of this Christian service The removal of DGR status for giving to religious instruction in government schools will significantly impact organisations responsible for the delivery of quality SRE/CRI programs My giving as is motivated purely by my faith and not motivate by any financial benefits. It is mandated in the New South Wales state constitution that all schools in NSW must provide an option for Scripture education which is primarily funded via private philanthropic giving. The removal of such status will

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	greatly impact the ability of these organisations to deliver these services. It is my hope that the federal government sees the benefit religious education provides to our youth and society as a whole.
448	To the Productivity commission, In light of the current reports by the productivity commission to remove the deductible gift recipient status for giving to religious education in state schools I'd like to make the below comments. SRE/CRI programs in government schools have proven student wellbeing benefits and contribute positively to the school community There is an intrinsic link between formative religious instruction in childhood years and religious service in adult years, and the community-wide benefits of this Christian service The removal of DGR status for giving to religious instruction in government schools will significantly impact organisations responsible for the delivery of quality SRE/CRI programs My giving as is motivated purely by my faith and not motivate by any financial benefits. It is mandated in the New South Wales state constitution that all schools in NSW must provide an option for Scripture education which is primarily funded via private philanthropic giving. The removal of such status will greatly impact the ability of these organisations to deliver these services. It is my hope that the federal government sees the benefit religious education provides to our youth and society as a whole.
449	To the Productivity commission, In light of the current reports by the productivity commission to remove the deductible gift recipient status for giving to religious education in state schools I'd like to make the below comments. SRE/CRI programs in government schools have proven student wellbeing benefits and contribute positively to the school community There is an intrinsic link between formative religious instruction in childhood years and religious service in adult years, and the community-wide benefits of this Christian service The removal of DGR status for giving to religious instruction in government schools will significantly impact organisations responsible for the delivery of quality SRE/CRI programs My giving as is motivated purely by my faith and not motivate by any financial benefits. It is mandated in the New South Wales state constitution that all schools in NSW must provide an option for Scripture education which is primarily funded via private philanthropic giving. The removal of such status will greatly impact the ability of these organisations to deliver these services. It is my hope that the federal government sees the benefit religious education provides to our youth and society as a whole.
450	I strongly support maintenance of DGR status for religious charities and school building funds. We as a family have made personal contributions to these funds and I believe they have an important role in the wider communities. Also Special Religious Education in public school is extremely important for many reasons including mentoring and pastoral care and emotional support that many children are lacking at school (due to lack of resources and funding) and even at home. Just the sheer scale of volunteers servicing this element in schools and large funding mean that the children will be poorer in emotional, psychological and spiritual support that they so desperately need.
451	To the Productivity commission, In light of the current reports by the productivity commission to remove the deductible gift recipient status for giving to religious education in state schools I'd like to make the below comments. SRE/CRI programs in government schools have proven student wellbeing benefits and contribute positively to the school community There is an intrinsic link between formative religious instruction in childhood years and religious service in adult years, and the community-wide benefits of this Christian service The removal of DGR status for giving to religious instruction in government schools will significantly impact organisations responsible for the delivery of quality SRE/CRI programs My giving as is motivated purely by my faith and not motivate by any financial benefits. It is mandated in the New South Wales state constitution that all schools in NSW must provide an option for Scripture education which is primarily funded via private philanthropic giving. The removal of such status will greatly impact the ability of these organisations to deliver these services. It is my hope that the federal government sees the benefit religious education provides to our youth and society as a whole. Thank you for your support in this and please continue to pray for the schools in our region.

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452	<p>Please maintain the DGR status of Special Religious Education within Government Schools. It supports this large volunteer labour force in Australia. Support should be increased, not reduced. It is important that faith communities – both their initiatives and their volunteers – be valued and recognised within the DGR system. Please acknowledge the community-wide benefits that faith communities bring by maintaining the DGR status. The spiritual health of students is the most important aspect of their education and development. Please do not neglect it. Support it as much as possible. Thank you</p>
453	<p>I would ask that tax deductibility for special religious education workers be allowed to continue. It serves a vital role in religious, moral and social training in our schools and I urge this to be taken into account. Please allow tax deductions to continue for for Special Religious Education.</p>
454	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little "community-wide benefit" and would encourage you, even if you don't have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result.</p>
455	<p>I am concerned the withdrawal of Deductible Gift Receipts for religious school based activities / donations is counter to the guiding principle of "community wide support". It is clear statistically that people of a religious / faith background are more likely to give to the community financially and with their own time, as well as being psychologically resilient, with the subsequent near and future social benefits to their own lives and the community. Special Religious Education (SRE) is a key avenue that these benefits are derived, as I have personally experienced. As a result of SRE, I have become a Christian, and regularly donate my time and money to activities that further the community. - I have experienced and am aware of the psychological benefits that a base in faith provides, with the subsequent decrease in psychological distress and increased resilience this provides to young people and into adulthood. - The promotion of acceptance of others and their background is another benefit, where the examining of ideas of faith and the base motivations of our actions is beneficial in avoiding division, hatred, and radicalisation of our youth. It is concerning that in your draft report that school based religious activities is combined with activities that further industry - these are objectively different, with industry focussed on promoting their own business, compared to religion being focussed on a selfless attitude of service to others.</p>

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456	<p>To the Productivity commission, In light of the current reports by the productivity commission to remove the deductible gift recipient status for giving to religious education in state schools I'd like to make the below comments. SRE/CRI programs in government schools have proven student wellbeing benefits and contribute positively to the school community There is an intrinsic link between formative religious instruction in childhood years and religious service in adult years, and the community-wide benefits of this Christian service The removal of DGR status for giving to religious instruction in government schools will significantly impact organisations responsible for the delivery of quality SRE/CRI programs My giving as is motivated purely by my faith and not motivate by any financial benefits. It is mandated in the New South Wales state constitution that all schools in NSW must provide an option for Scripture education which is primarily funded via private philanthropic giving. The removal of such status will greatly impact the ability of these organisations to deliver these services. It is my hope that the federal government sees the benefit religious education provides to our youth and society as a whole.</p>
457	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don't have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result.</p>
458	<p>On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. I find the Commission's report devoid of fact and reason as to why people of faith, independent education providers, and parents of children who opt in for Special Religious Education are being discriminated against, by removing the existing charitable status. On what basis, data, anecdotal evidence, studies did the Commission determine that it brings no 'community wide benefit'? How many billions of dollars have these funds contributed to health and wellbeing of millions of Australians, provided essential educational facilities and programs? Many volunteers and people of faith who work for these organisations do so at a personal financial cost to live out their personal faith position. Where is the equality, diversity and inclusivity that all Australians are seeking in the findings of your report. This is another case of inclusiveness and equality is for everyone, BUT for people of faith. What harm is being brought to this country by removing</p>

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	<p>this status, your report is devoid of reason. To take away the DGR status of school building funds for independent schools puts more burden on a government that cannot provide adequate capital funding for the public education sector. This is a government that heavily relies on hardworking Australian citizens to support independent education by providing tax deductions so capital can be raised to meet the enrolment demand for independent education, as public education demand flounders. I wholly reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don’t have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology that will damage Multicultural Australia as a result.</p>
459	<p>Dear Commissioners, I am very appreciative for Special Religious Education within Government Schools. I want DGR status to be maintained or increased for religious education in government schools, including school building funds, because of the enormous contribution it makes to the growth of giving in Australia (both financially and volunteering). This makes sense when you realise that religious education in Australia has the largest volunteer weekly labour force in Australia, enabling this giving to happen. Removing DGR status would only reduce this community giving (both financial and volunteering) and reduce the social cohesion that it develops in Australia.</p>
460	<p>It is disappointing that the major group that loses benefits under the draft are those linking education and religious belief. I am active donor to NSW high school SRE teaching, at schools with which neither I nor any family member has any link, because I strongly believe SRE brings broad community benefits of a moral life framework to children. The draft proposal is a strongly biased outcome, dressed up as "balance". I also note on pg 183 of the draft report that "If donors are themselves the primary beneficiaries of a donation, then the transaction is akin to a purely private one, and is therefore less likely to be susceptible to market failure and less likely to warrant government support." This is applied to religious groups, but surely this also should apply to every advocacy group in which the proponents have a choice in identifying with the advocacy target. So, advocacy for women or youth is reasonable since you don't choose to be these, but potentially ethnically-focused groups or behavioral groups such as LGBT where a person may choose to align or not. Again, there appears to be an underlying bias against people of faith vs any other world view.</p>
461	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union’s ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government’s goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don’t have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result.</p>

No.	Comment
462	<p>Hi there, I'm writing to express my appreciation that, until now, monetary gifts toward religious education in schools have been tax deductible. This provision has meant that the many volunteers for these programs have had resources to provide interesting and innovative activities and crafts for the participants in the Special Religious Education programs. As you may know, the provision and support of religious education programs within schools encourage participants to explore ideals that support social cohesion first, within schools, then in broader communities as adults; maintain positive values within schools; and create and maintain friendships across the various groups within schools. Religious education programs support each of these values and are run with no cost to schools. Truly they are unique and precious and need to be supported (including their funding) rather than discouraged. If the current DGR status is removed the programs and therefore the participants will be greatly disadvantaged. Thank-you for your time reading this: my hope is that you will reconsider the decision to remove DGR status to religious education within schools, Kind regards, Joanne Williams</p>
463	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don't have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result.</p>
464	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which</p>

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465	I would like DGR status to be maintained for religious charities, school building funds and special religious education in government schools.
466	To the Productivity commission, In light of the current reports by the productivity commission to remove the deductible gift recipient status for giving to religious education in state schools I’d like to make the below comments. - SRE/CRI programs in government schools have proven student wellbeing benefits and contribute positively to the school community - There is an intrinsic link between formative religious instruction in childhood years and religious service in adult years, and the community-wide benefits of this Christian service - The removal of DGR status for giving to religious instruction in government schools will significantly impact organisations responsible for the delivery of quality SRE/CRI programs - My giving as is motivated purely by my faith and not motivate by any financial benefits. It is mandated in the New South Wales state constitution that all schools in NSW must provide an option for Scripture education which is primarily funded via private philanthropic giving. The removal of such status will greatly impact the ability of these organisations to deliver these services. It is my hope that the federal government sees the benefit religious education provides to our youth and society as a whole.
467	I am concerned about the pressure your proposed reforms will place on school building funds. If school fees have to increase to cover a reduction in money going to building funds. This will force more students to Government schools and increase the burden on tax payers. At the moment, the cost to tax payers of the combined Federal and State funding is higher per student for Government schools. Faith-based education is the fastest growing sector of education – it is what Australians are increasingly turning to. Funding for these schools is mainly through fees and donations – so why are you therefore making it harder for them to provide quality education. In our city of Orange we have an overcrowding issue at Orange High School a government school, probably because of social issues at Canobolas High School, the other government school. This is putting growth pressures on the private schools. And funding pressures would be detrimental to schooling in this city. Recently I attended an open day at Orange High. The students showing us around the school were telling us about the social issues there, causing the toilet blocks to be closed, due to vandalism. And Orange High is the preferred government school in the eyes of the community. I ask again not to reduce the funding for religious school building funds, because of the detrimental impact it will have on schooling in our city.
468	To the Productivity commission, In light of the current reports by the productivity commission to remove the deductible gift recipient status for giving to religious education in state schools I’d like to make the below comments. SRE/CRI programs in government schools have proven student wellbeing benefits and contribute positively to the school community There is an intrinsic link between formative religious instruction in childhood years and religious service in adult years, and the community-wide benefits of this Christian service. The removal of DGR status for giving to religious instruction in government schools will significantly impact organisations responsible for the delivery of quality SRE/CRI programs My giving as is motivated purely by my faith and not motivate by any financial benefits. It is mandated in the New South Wales state constitution that all schools in NSW must provide an option for Scripture education which is primarily funded via private philanthropic giving. The removal of such status will greatly impact the ability of these organisations to deliver these services. It is my hope that the federal government sees the benefit religious education provides to our youth and society as a whole. Thank you for your support in this and please continue to pray for the schools in our region.

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469	<p>Dear Commissioners, I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. I think it is good that you are looking at expanding the system to cover more initiatives such as animal welfare, but I am quite concerned that to achieve this you are taking away DGR status from almost exclusively religious charities – which will have a huge impact on important initiatives such as school building funds and religious education in government schools. Australia is the most multicultural nation on earth, and approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education, and its teachers, is not a quality decision for Australia, and will have long term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent the largest weekly group of volunteers in our nation. In a report where on the one hand, you are articulating the government’s goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed, because back in the 1950s when DGR status was established, no government support was given by other means and now it is. This is not a good enough reason – unless the government is going to actually front up and supply ALL the capital expenditure needs of these schools (which I’m sure they won’t) why would you then seek to penalise both the schools AND the private citizens who are donating to these schools and funding education? Faith-based education is the fastest growing sector of education in Australia – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest growing sector of education – which is predominantly privately funded by citizens – and are also putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, and risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think we, and you, can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your [presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don’t have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage Australia as a result.</p>
470	<p>I am committed to Christian schools being an option for parents, also alleviating more schooling burden for the government. Don’t put impediment in their way. Also parents should be given the option of having religious education for their children. In a society based on so many Christian norms this is a democratic right. I urge you to reconsider p.</p>
471	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union’s ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government’s goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking</p>

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472	<p>Dear Commissioners, Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union’s ministry programs. I am very concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers along with surf life savers. In your report you, on the one hand, articulate the government’s goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia’s fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. So, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don’t have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result. Yours sincerely, Kristine Apitz</p>
473	<p>I have been blessed during my years as a Science High School teacher and enjoyed my time with the students teaching Science from 1971 until retiring in 2000. My teaching SU at lunch time helped both students and staff relations immensely. Even non-religious teachers were often commenting on pupils attitudes to them as teachers. Many non -religious students went on SU camps during the holidays. I still meet many of the students during my retirement, who go out of their way to chat about their present families, as many have fond memories of their "Scripture Union camps". I pray that God will give the 'decision makers' wisdom and compassion as they work through the information before them. SU has shown itself an essential part of a school's educational structure. This is especially so because of its volunteers' belief in the Bibles truth and historicity.</p>
474	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union’s ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government’s goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia’s fastest-growing education sector – which</p>

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475	I value and appreciate Special Religious Education within Government Schools, which has the largest weekly volunteer labour force in Australia. I would ask that government recognise, enable and INCREASE their support for this, not reduce it. I think that DGR status should be maintained for religious education in government schools. It is of concern that approximately 35% of students now attend non-Government schools because a large percentage of their parents are concerned by the perceived anti-faith bias within public education. The emphasis on Christian values and love of neighbour which are central to the teaching of Christian religious education, help to create a more caring society. They challenge a more self-centred view of life.
476	I'm very concerned to hear that the govt is considering removing DGR status for schools which teach religion. It's more than evident that when religious education is removed from schools, that students are swayed towards 'woke' ideologies currently plaguing our nation. Removing DGR status effectively reduces funding, which comes from everyday people wanting to keep our schools & nation safe by teaching moralistic values.
477	To the Productivity commission, In light of the current reports by the productivity commission to remove the deductible gift recipient status for giving to religious education in state schools I'd like to make the below comments. SRE/CRI programs in government schools have proven student wellbeing benefits and contribute positively to the school community There is an intrinsic link between formative religious instruction in childhood years and religious service in adult years, and the community-wide benefits of this Christian service The removal of DGR status for giving to religious instruction in government schools will significantly impact organisations responsible for the delivery of quality SRE/CRI programs My giving as is motivated purely by my faith and not motivate by any financial benefits. It is mandated in the New South Wales state constitution that all schools in NSW must provide an option for Scripture education which is primarily funded via private philanthropic giving. The removal of such status will greatly impact the ability of these organisations to deliver these services. It is my hope that the federal government sees the benefit religious education provides to our youth and society as a whole.
478	This is an attack on faith communities who contribute so many positive things to society. Ask any school about the contributions of their SRE teachers and chaplains and you get a positive response. Every parent should have the right to have their faith supported and encouraged in the public system. If this doesn't happen you drive people into private education and further divide society into separate groups.
479	The DGR system allows many to find community through programs such as SRE and church communities. These programs and systems of faith communities add value to those who participate as they provide a sense of inclusion, belonging, community, and friendship. These faith communities are often providing front-line support to those in need within these communities. I really appreciate that SRE is part of the school policy in NSW government schools as I think it's important for people to learn more and understand their faith tradition in an informed and safe way. The current DGR allows this to happen.

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480	I worked with many teenagers who have benefited from Special Religious Education in schools, an important part of their development. These organizations are not there to make money or profit, and removing their DGR status would be devastating for this work. At a time when our young people need more support, not less, this move makes no sense.
481	I think special religious education in public schools is of vital importance to our society and I have a great admiration for the faithful people who volunteer their time that enables this to happen. I ask the Government to maintain their support for this, not reduce it. There is a great benefit to children that these faith communities bring . I taught special religious education for many years and saw first hand how much young people loved being in my class. I'm sure that is the same in every case.
482	Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don't have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result.
483	To the Productivity commission, In light of the current reports by the productivity commission to remove the deductible gift recipient status for giving to religious education in state schools I'd like to make the below comments. SRE/CRI programs in government schools have proven student wellbeing benefits and contribute positively to the school community There is an intrinsic link between formative religious instruction in childhood years and religious service in adult years, and the community-wide benefits of this Christian service The removal of DGR status for giving to religious instruction in government schools will significantly impact organisations responsible for the delivery of quality SRE/CRI programs My giving as is motivated purely by my faith and not motivate by any financial benefits. It is mandated in the New South Wales state constitution that all schools in NSW must provide an option for Scripture education which is primarily funded via private philanthropic giving. The removal of such status will greatly impact the ability of these organisations to deliver these services. It is my hope that the federal government sees the benefit religious education provides to our youth and society as a whole.
484	Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the

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485	<p>SRE in schools provides a unique opportunity for children to discuss the big questions dealing with meaning and purpose. There is no other forum for them to test the integrity of their world view against thousands of years of Christian documents that have been investigated by innumerable people since their creation. Without adults taking the time to share the big issues of life with them, they will be at the mercy of Tik Tok and YouTube etc to misdirect or simply permanently distract them. In SRE children can consider life and death and suffering and money and work and values and forgiveness... these are formative issues that drive our priorities, offer us self acceptance, motivate us to have compassion, commitment, integrity and humility. These things protect the integrity of our social fabric and of our personal well being. It is in everyone's interest to introduce children to these overarching issues and more importantly, to offer them the hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ. We must not work towards or encourage a religious void as has been done in China and France and Russia. The social cost is too high.</p>
486	<p>While the proposal to remove DGR status for school building funds is understandable, as is often the case with discussions about private schooling, it does not distinguish between elite wealthy private schools and low fee private schools. These are two very different categories. If the proposals were to go ahead, I would suggest at least having an income threshold to discern between those schools for whom the perceived potential issue of "material risk of substitution between fees and donations" is actually present. Both low -fee and new independent schools in the start-up phase not only do not suffer from this issue, but would be significantly disadvantaged. I am sure it would likely prevent some independent schools from starting, and while it is not often admitted, the government relies upon the independent schooling sector. Removing DGR status for all schools indiscriminately without taking into consideration relative income would have a net negative outcome for the entire community.</p>
487	<p>To the Productivity commission, In light of the current reports by the productivity commission to remove the deductible gift recipient status for giving to religious education in state schools I'd like to make the below comments. SRE/CRI programs in government schools have proven student wellbeing benefits and contribute positively to the school community There is an intrinsic link between formative religious instruction in childhood years and religious service in adult years, and the community-wide benefits of this Christian service The removal of DGR status for giving to religious instruction in government schools will significantly impact organisations responsible for the delivery of quality SRE/CRI programs My giving as is motivated purely by my faith and not motivate by any financial benefits. It is mandated in the New South Wales state</p>

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488	<p>Dear Commissioners. I note that you are considering withdrawing DGR status to religious bodies that provide faith teaching in Government schools. I was surprised that you would even consider withdrawing this benefit. The volunteers who provide Special Religious Education from all faiths is one of the largest group of volunteers in this country. They provide children either in class or lunchtime group's opportunity to learn about their faith. These volunteers give up their time but the material used in class and training comes at a cost and DGR status minimises out of pocket expenses. In this country founded on Christian principles (The first first church service by Rev. Richard Johnson was held in early February 1788) there are still over 60% of citizens who have a religion . I therefore ask you to please consider the retention of DGR status for these classes and for not for profit organisations such as Scripture Union and Crusaders. Your sincerely Geoff Williams</p>
489	<p>I want to see volunteers within the faith communities recognized within the DGR system.</p>
490	<p>Dear Commissioners, I am strongly concerned by your recommendation to remove DGR status of religious education in government schools. This change would place undue pressure on the thousands of volunteers from various faiths who see the value in sharing religion with children as they grow up in a wonderfully multicultural country, many of whom grow up to see their religion as a core part of their identity. Approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion, yet your report seems to suggest it is in their best interest to remove a key financial support system that upholds their beliefs. If this change is made, it will have serious consequences for the welfare of religious children for many years to come. As a result, I reject your recommendation and suggest that even if you do not have a religious belief, that you would support the beliefs of many who hold them dear. Thank you for your time</p>
491	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little "community-wide benefit" and would encourage you, even if you don't have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result.</p>

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492	SRE is very important in schools. As both someone who has benefitted from it, and someone who provided it for a year, I really think it is an important system, with the largest weekly volunteer labour force in Australia enabling it to happen. The government should be maintaining or even increasing their support for SRE, not reducing it. Therefore, I believe strongly that DGR status should be maintained for religious education providers in government schools.
493	I believe that there is substantial evidence that SRE contributes to the psychological welfare of students. It provides students with a foundational understanding of their faith tradition and promotes understanding between those of different faiths, representing our communities and promoting multiculturalism and respect. My church and college financially support this work and the tax benefits are crucial.
494	Dear Commissioners, As a volunteer in my local school with religious education and a volunteer with Scripture union for a local girls camp I have seen great benefit in what I do as part of a bigger picture and know that the draft report and reforms to the DGR system would greatly impact these opportunities for young people. I have a passion for helping young people see their own value and making them know they are loved and appreciated. In each of the roles I volunteer in, I am able to reach the young ones in a unique and different form to a parent or a teacher and come alongside them where they are at. This really is something that is deep need this day and age when kids tend to isolate themselves on phones and gaming and so struggle to live socially in the world to have to offer. In taking this drastic step it is like saying you young people don't matter. Please reconsider this so that I and the many, many other volunteers in the religious sector can develop the funding needed to reach out and make a difference.
495	To the Productivity commission, In light of the current reports by the productivity commission to remove the deductible gift recipient status for giving to religious education in state schools I'd like to make the below comments. SRE/CRI programs in government schools have proven student wellbeing benefits and contribute positively to the school community There is an intrinsic link between formative religious instruction in childhood years and religious service in adult years, and the community-wide benefits of this Christian service The removal of DGR status for giving to religious instruction in government schools will significantly impact organisations responsible for the delivery of quality SRE/CRI programs My giving as is motivated purely by my faith and not motivate by any financial benefits. It is mandated in the New South Wales state constitution that all schools in NSW must provide an option for Scripture education which is primarily funded via private philanthropic giving. The removal of such status will greatly impact the ability of these organisations to deliver these services. It is my hope that the federal government sees the benefit religious education provides to our youth and society as a whole.
496	Special Religious Education within Government Schools, and the largest weekly volunteer labour force in Australia that enables this to happen – so we are asking the government to maintain or increase their support for this, not reduce it. We want DGR status to be maintained for religious education in government schools. We want to see volunteers within the faith communities recognised within the DGR system. The Commission needs to understand the community-wide benefits that faith communities bring. In this age of troubled and lost youth, victims of drugs, alcohol, vapes and so forth. Family breakups. Youth violence and mental issues and high suicide rates.
497	I am extremely concerned that the Government would consider withdrawing DGR status from organizations which provide religious education in government schools. Special Religious Education within Government Schools delivers major individual student and community benefits. This was recognised by the NSW Department of Education in its 2017 review of SRE, finding that SRE implementation will "strengthen young people's personal identity and convey the importance of Special Religious Education for their moral and ethical development." and "In addition to providing important psychological benefits to student's health and well-being, SRE classes can strengthen the multi-cultural fabric of Australia and foster social cohesion by providing a sense of belonging and safe places for students to explore deep questions of cultural and religious identity in an environment of trust and respect." The report's findings and recommendations highlighted how "SRE positively contributes to students'

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	<p>understanding of their cultural heritage, is an avenue for their spiritual care, builds tolerance in schools, promotes multiculturalism, contributes to a well-rounded education, and connects schools with their local community". The review also recognised Harvard University research which found that religious participation in adolescence provides students with "greater subsequent psychological well-being, character strengths, and lower risks of mental illness and several health behaviours." As a result, the NSW DoE recognises Spiritual Well-being, as provided by SRE, as one of its five critical aspects for successful education. SRE is totally funded by donors, making DGR status critical for the continued provision of this vital service to our students and the wider community. As the Australian Taxation system is designed to support the well-being of the Australian community it is both logical and reasonable that DGR status be afforded to this aspect of our community. SRE is community run and has the largest weekly volunteer labour force in Australia. As such I implore the Government to maintain and indeed increase its support for SRE education, not reduce it. I propose in the strongest possible terms that DGR status be maintained for religious education in government schools. Also that volunteers within the faith communities be recognised within the DGR system.</p>
498	<p>Dear Commissioners, I write to highlight the vital work undertaken by Scripture Union NSW in organising lunchtime groups within government schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a fundamental aspect of Scripture Union's ministry programs. My chief concern pertains to the draft report and proposed reforms to the DGR system. While it is commendable that you are contemplating expanding the system to encompass more initiatives, such as animal welfare, it is troubling that in doing so, you intend to revoke DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW. Such a decision would significantly affect the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia prides itself on being a multicultural nation, with approximately 60% of its citizens identifying with a religion. However, your report seems to be based on the ideology that religion provides no community-wide benefit. Research demonstrates that religious education in schools is among the most effective means of promoting social cohesion. Placing additional pressure on this form of education and its teachers is not in the best interest of Australia and will have lasting repercussions. Religious Education teachers in Australia constitute our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. While your report aims to double financial and volunteering contributions by 2030, it simultaneously withdraws support from faith communities, which comprise a significant portion of those who contribute to and will continue to contribute to achieving this goal. This decision lacks wisdom. Furthermore, the removal of DGR status from school building funds is shortsighted. Faith-based education represents Australia's fastest-growing education sector, indicating a clear preference and utilisation within our communities. Creating additional obstacles for this sector to thrive is counterproductive. In summary, your actions penalise the fastest-growing education sector, primarily funded by citizens, and place undue strain on Australia's largest weekly group of volunteers. Such measures risk diminishing social cohesion. I firmly believe we can do better than this. In light of the points raised, I vehemently reject the presumption that these initiatives lack "community-wide benefit." I urge you, even if you do not hold religious beliefs yourself, to recognise that your report embodies discriminatory and minimising ideology, with potential repercussions for Multicultural Australia. Sincerely, Jody</p>
499	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. There are also many other organisations who do this, and many other students impacted. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is a multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand,</p>

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	<p>you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This doesn't make sense. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don't have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result. Please reconsider this policy.</p>
500	<p>Hello! I am concerned about what these suggested DGR reforms will mean for Australia. Removing the DGR status from Religious Education places undue financial pressure on a system that actually represents Australia's largest weekly volunteer group. The government wants to double giving (finances and volunteering) by 2030 but will be doing the opposite if removing DGR status from Religious Education places. Research shows very clearly that Religious Education provides strong community-wide benefits because it helps diffuse racial and religious tensions. It enables instruction to be within a monitored environment – as opposed to either be non-existent and fed by radical events in the media, or for education to be outworked by radical content online. 60% of the population in Australia has connection to a religion, and Australia is the most multicultural community on earth. Social cohesion is therefore hugely important in Australia – and religious education is well-researched to build this. This IS a community-wide benefit – and yet religion in your report appears to be treated otherwise. With the current cost of living pressures, I think we should make it easier for people to give money and volunteer, not harder. Religious Education in schools is supported by Australia's largest weekly group of volunteers. Surely this is a sign of how important this is, and that the DGR status is needed to help maintain their support and quality curriculums. Please reconsider these reforms. If people have the option to give somewhere either with or without DGR status, I think the average Australian would ultimately lean towards choosing those with. As such you are making it harder for these volunteers to do their valuable work. Australia can, and needs to, do better than this.</p>
501	<p>I am an active member of the Anglican Church and it is my faith that prompts my giving habits, both through financial help and time and I value the tax deductibility (DGR status) for my financial contributions. I greatly value the contribution SRE makes to young lives and to Australian society by delivering key psychological benefits to students, promoting multiculturalism and social acceptance, and reducing the risk of student radicalization and believe there is strong evidence to support this. I believe that evidence supports the fact that people of faith are 25% more likely than their secular counterparts to donate money and 25% more likely to volunteer their help. I fully support maintaining DGR status for SRE and school building funds, and I want the Government to recognize and value the contribution faith communities make to Australian society.</p>
502	<p>Dear Commissioners, I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. I think it is good that you are looking at expanding the system to cover more initiatives such as animal welfare, but I am quite concerned that to achieve this you are taking away DGR status from almost exclusively religious charities – which will have a huge impact on important initiatives such as school building funds and religious education in government schools. Australia is the most multicultural nation on earth, and approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education, and its teachers, is not a quality decision for Australia, and will have long term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent the largest weekly group of volunteers in our nation. In a report where on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand you are</p>

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	<p>removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed, because back in the 1950s when DGR status was established, no government support was given by other means and now it is. This is not a good enough reason – unless the government is going to actually front up and supply ALL the capital expenditure needs of these schools (which I'm sure they won't) why would you then seek to penalise both the schools AND the private citizens who are donating to these schools and funding education? Faith-based education is the fastest growing sector of education in Australia – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest growing sector of education – which is predominantly privately funded by citizens – and are also putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, and risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think we, and you, can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your [presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don't have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage Australia as a result.</p>
503	<p>Dear Commissioners, Although I was encouraged by many aspects of the draft report to the DGR system, I became aware of a contradiction in Recommendation 6.1. This contradiction relates to the exclusion of religious educational activities. Charities involved in activities valued by the community should be encouraged by the DGR system. In this way, the DGR should have the greatest net benefit to the whole community. Yet, in Australia's multicultural society, 60% of Australians identify with a religion. So, we can promote social cohesion by well-presented religious education in schools. I would recommend including religious education in schools as this benefits the community. Recommendation 7.5 in the draft report is "Explicitly consider the effects on volunteers when designing policies and programs". This recommendation reflects the significant benefit of volunteers to the community. One hindrance to volunteers is adequate support in the form of training. So, to improve community benefit, DGR status should include organisations training volunteers who support recognised school programs. Yet, recommendation 6.1 excludes organisations training the largest weekly group of volunteers because it includes religious educational activities. Furthermore, promoting the training of volunteers would also be clear of the danger of converting a donation into a private benefit, as the volunteer is far removed from the donation. Removing DGR status from religious educational activities seems to be based on the assumption that they are of little benefit to the community. Yet, they do benefit the community. A fairer and simpler DGR system would include religious educational activities. In particular, it should include training volunteers to support programs in public schools.</p>
504	<p>Dear Commissioners, I urge you to retain the DGR status for Special Religious Status and building funds for Religious Schools. I write as one of the many volunteers who teaches SRE. When I taught year 7 SRE, around 40 percent of students opted into taking SRE classes, opting for this class, rather than free time. Parents value SRE taught in schools. SRE, which is provided by many different religious groups has been demonstrated through research to provide benefits within the school including social cohesion. Those who hold religious beliefs are a majority group, comprising around 60 percent of Australians. Religious education teaches strong community values to students and provides them with opportunities to explore purpose and meaning in their lives. SRE teachers are the largest single group of volunteers and our contributions to the social fabric needs to be financially supported. Furthermore, building funds for religious schools should also be maintained. Parents are increasingly sending their children to religious schools, at significant personal cost, because they value the education and moral values taught in these schools. Two country religious schools at Nambucca Heads and Coffs Harbour are experiencing high demand for places from k-12 and cannot keep up with demand. These are economically depressed areas. I urge you to continue to support SRE in schools and the building funds for religious schools. The benefits of social cohesion, student well being are important today when many children struggle with anxiety. Finally there is a strong demand from many parents for these services. Yours sincerely Julia Williams</p>

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505	<p>If there's one thing we know about religious instruction, it's that people who have had religious instruction are less likely to be religious bigots. Such people tend to be ignorant of both religions other than their own and also their own religion if they identify with a particular religion. Public schools in NSW do not provide religious instruction, but they allow representatives of recognised religions to teach Special Religious Education in schools. It is free to the children, not compulsory, uses an approved curriculum, and the teachers are qualified and registered to teach SRE. All the funding for running SRE (materials, training, registering etc) is from organisations which currently have charitable status for tax purposes. Without this status, it would be very difficult to continue to run SRE. Most teachers are volunteers, but some are paid, full-time teachers. If this status is removed, it will be difficult indeed to provide this free service to almost all public schools. If SRE is not available in the local public school, some parents would choose to take their children out of public school and enroll them in a private school - usually a religious school - which costs the Federal Government a great deal more than what the tax deductibility of SRE providers cost! Given the other known benefits that religion can bring to individuals and the community (eg report from Royal Australian and New Zealand College and Psychiatrists, International Journal of Mental Health Systems, and many, many others), it would be extremely short-sighted to remove a valuable avenue for religious education for children in our schools. If the Government wants to cut out tax deductions for unworthy or unethical causes, send in the auditors and get rid of all the sham "charities".</p>
506	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don't have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result.</p>
507	<p>The church has always been on the forefront of education, providing orphans, families and those less fortunate the opportunity to learn through the donations of generous givers. Most schools were founded by churches or church organisations. Removing the tax deductible donations for faith based organisations cannot have anything but a negative impact on society, teachers, schools and ultimately children. Religion forms a keystone of our society - faith based societies provide people with the opportunity to find meaning in life, contributing significantly to societal well-being. If the government is looking to increase tax revenues, they should look elsewhere.</p>

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508	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may be aware that Scripture Union NSW conducts lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union’s ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Yet, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation’s largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government’s goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This decision does not align with aspirations of healthier community engagement. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia’s fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalizing both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don’t have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimizing in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result.</p>
509	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union’s ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation’s largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government’s goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia’s fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don’t have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result.</p>
510	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union’s ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the</p>

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511	<p>To the Productivity commission, In light of the current reports by the productivity commission to remove the deductible gift recipient status for giving to religious education in state schools I'd like to make the below comments.SRE/CRI programs in government schools have proven student wellbeing benefits and contribute positively to the school communityThere is an intrinsic link between formative religious instruction in childhood years and religious service in adult years, and the community-wide benefits of this Christian serviceThe removal of DGR status for giving to religious instruction in government schools will significantly impact organisations responsible for the delivery of quality SRE/CRI programsMy giving as is motivated purely by my faith and not motivate by any financial benefits.It is mandated in the New South Wales state constitution that all schools in NSW must provide an option for Scripture education which is primarily funded via private philanthropic giving. The removal of such status will greatly impact the ability of these organisations to deliver these services. It is my hope that the federal government sees the benefit religious education provides to our youth and society as a whole.</p>
512	<p>Dear Commissioners, I am concerned by your current draft report and reforms to the DGR system. While I applaud efforts to expand the system to cover a wider range of initiatives, you are also removing DGR status from many charities that support Special Religious Education in schools. This means removing support for the largest weekly volunteer labour force in Australia, and by extension, removing support for the students and schools who benefit from these programs. I work in a public school in a regional area, and our volunteer SRE teachers are a valued part of our school community. Though many of our students and families are not a part of any faith group or religious affiliation, they value the efforts of our SRE teachers and similar programs. Our school would be worse off without their contributions, and the organisations who train and supply our volunteers depend on their DGR status to continue operating. Throughout drought, fire, flood, plague, the pandemic, and local tragedy in our small community, our religious volunteers have been here to support our school community. Schools in our area are few and far between, and without travelling for hours there is limited choice for families. By removing the DGR status of school building funds, you will also be making it harder for faith-based schools to expand into new areas and improve facilities. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector, which tells us that families want and need these services. While public schools are</p>

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	struggling for staff and resources, why would you make it harder for largely citizen-funded schools to build their facilities? Research has shown that religious education is of great benefit to students, both from the personal mental health benefits, through to the wider positive influence on social cohesion. I encourage you to understand that this report seriously minimises the impact of SRE volunteers and faith-based schools on students and the wider education system. This could even be considered discriminatory, and certainly diminishes the value of Australia's multicultural identity.
513	I think Special Religious Education in Government Schools is an important and valuable contribution to our children's education and our community. It is an opportunity for volunteers to share their values and faith with children in a space away from social media. It gives children an opportunity to consider faith for themselves. I want to see DGR status maintained for religious education in government schools.
514	Dear Commissioners, I understand that you are tasked with identifying opportunities to grow philanthropic giving in Australia. And yet in your draft report you make a recommendation that will reduce philanthropic giving and volunteerism rather than increase them. You currently recommend that charities that have DGR status for school building funds or to provide religious education in government schools have their DGR status withdrawn. You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. Removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are proposing to penalise both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don't have a religious belief yourself, to understand that the above aspect of your report is discriminatory and will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result.
515	I've read through the PC draft report and have significant concerns. No problems with reforming the DGR system in our country however the recommendations to remove DGR status for Religious Charities defies belief. It either hasn't been thought through OR there is a 'target' being placed on anything to do with religion. Numerous studies (eg: Social Science and Medicine 73(5), (769-767); and Forbes (22 December 2013)) have pointed to the wider health, economic, social and educational benefits that faith communities bring to society. Understandably faith communities also provide social cohesion and a sense of community. Much of a child's understanding of faith (and even more so in today's environment) comes from Religious Education in schools. Indeed, it is worth noting that Recommendation No.7 in The Bloom Review to the UK Government in 2023 (Does Government do God? An independent review into how the government engages with faith. Requested by the then Prime Minister Boris Johnson) focused on 'improving the teaching of faith literacy and Religious Education with a view to cultivating a more inclusive society....' Whilst the UK environment differs from our own, clearly the review found that Religious Education was beneficial for a strong society, even helping diffuse racial and religious tensions. Removing the

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	<p>opportunity to receive a Tax Deduction supporting Religious Education will only undermine advantages for individuals and communities across our country. Overall...detrimental to the good of our nation. Additionally, your terms of reference include a desire to seek ways to increase volunteer work in Australia. Religious Education in Australia is supported by the largest volunteer sector in our country. Removing DGR ability for Religious Education providers to provide support and quality curriculum will harpoon this. This doesn't appear to be very intelligent. And then there is the removal of DGR status for educational building funds. Certainly 'current' parents benefit from school buildings however I would suggest that the largest contributors to DGR building funds are alumni, many of whom don't benefit at all but rather are making the donation due to fondness towards the school or an ability to see, and respond to, the need. Of course there is much more to consider here. In many cases, including the school my children attend, buildings that have benefited from DGR funds are utilised by more than just the school. Often these schools allow other NFP organisations access to their buildings and resources. ie: there is a larger community benefit resulting from building funds which is not captured in your draft report. Summary: please reconsider your current stated reforms. I believe there is a whole lot of work that hasn't been done properly.</p>
516	<p>Dear Commissioners, I am a volunteer helper for Special Religious Education. at Faulconbridge Public School, NSW. This is a wonderful opportunity to influence children to become students with good moral values and to help mould their characters to become future citizens. I also give money to help support Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don't have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result.</p>
517	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality</p>

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518	<p>Dear Commissioners, I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. I think it is good that you are looking at expanding the system to cover more initiatives such as animal welfare, but I am quite concerned that to achieve this you are taking away DGR status from almost exclusively religious charities – which will have a huge impact on important initiatives such as school building funds and religious education in government schools.</p>
519	<p>Hello. In many countries all giving to recognised established institutions is tax deductible but not in Australia. If as is proposed tax deductibility is withdrawn from even the bare minimum of things in relation to religious education then I think people who are religious would be discriminated against. The thousands of volunteers who teach religious education, often in places where parents cant afford to buy books, should be supported at least in this small way as they try to help young people find a better way of life than the dry spiritual desert that is our current secular school system.</p>
520	<p>Dear Sir / Madam Regarding the Federal Government's Productivity Commission draft report, and the threat it contains to the removal of tax deductibility for initiatives such as Special Religious Education in Government Schools – and the tax deductibility of school building funds. I wish to add my voice to the proposal and say that's its unfair that donations made to Schools Religious education programs should remain Tax deductible for their donors. People volunteer a lot of their time and efforts to support Kids Religious Education and School Building Funds to ensure there is a Future for Schools that teach and have a Christian ethos. It is a very important issue to the community and giving financially to these causes should not be penalized. Please protect these values for our students and our communities and Maintain DGR charity status for school building funds and to provide religious education in government schools. I believe that Faith communities contribute in an enormous way to our society, both financial giving and volunteering of their time, and in ways that contribute to social cohesion and benefitting society as a whole. Sincerely with faith and hope, Kyriaki Spanakis</p>
521	<p>Dear Commissioners, I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. I think it is good that you are looking at expanding the system to cover more initiatives such as animal welfare, but I am quite concerned that to achieve this you are taking away DGR status from almost exclusively religious charities – which will have a huge impact on important initiatives such as school building funds and religious education in government schools. Australia is the most multicultural nation on earth, and approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education, and its teachers, is not a quality decision for Australia, and will have long term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent the largest weekly group of volunteers in our nation. In a report where on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand you are</p>

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	<p>removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed, because back in the 1950s when DGR status was established, no government support was given by other means and now it is. This is not a good enough reason – unless the government is going to actually front up and supply ALL the capital expenditure needs of these schools (which I’m sure they won’t) why would you then seek to penalise both the schools AND the private citizens who are donating to these schools and funding education? Faith-based education is the fastest growing sector of education in Australia – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest growing sector of education – which is predominantly privately funded by citizens – and are also putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, and risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think we, and you, can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your [presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don’t have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage Australia as a result.</p>
522	<p>I have been teaching Christian scripture (SRE) voluntarily for 10 years, and do so because I believe it is vital for students to be exposed to the basic tenets of the Christian faith. As adults they will, of course, form their own opinions and beliefs about life, but teaching them about Christianity as children gives them the opportunity to at least make that choice. The Christian faith underpins many important values in our society, such as the value of human life. Having this as a core value motivates love, kindness, tolerance and inclusion, as well as many other essential ingredients for a healthy society. I personally support the work of organisations such as Youthworks and Baptist SRE financially, as they in turn support me with training and resources. I give to these organisations because I believe in them, not because I don't know what else to do with my money! The fact that they are tax deductible is invaluable for me and many others in supporting these worthwhile organisations. Many people will not be able to give financially if their donations are not tax deductible. Please consider the importance faith-based teaching has in our schools, and allow tax deductible contributions to continue.</p>
523	<p>I’m concerned about what these suggested DGR reforms will mean for Australia. Research shows very clearly that Religious Education provides strong community-wide benefits because it helps diffuse racial and religious tensions. It enables instruction to be within a monitored environment – as opposed to either be non-existent and fed by radical events in the media, or for education to be outworked by radical content online. By removing DGR status from Religious Education, you are placing undue financial pressure on a system that actually represents Australia’s largest weekly volunteer group. I don’t understand why this wasn’t taken into account in your report, when you articulate that the government wants to double giving (finances and volunteering) by 2030. Your reforms, and this goal, seem to be at odds. 60% of the population in Australia has connection to a religion, and Australia is the most multicultural community on earth. Social cohesion is therefore hugely important in Australia – and religious education is well-researched to build this. This IS a community-wide benefit – and yet religion in your report appears to be treated otherwise. With the current cost of living pressures, I think we should make it easier for people to give money and volunteer, not harder. Religious Education in schools is supported by Australia’s largest weekly group of volunteers. Surely this is a sign of how important this is, and that the DGR status is needed to help maintain their support and quality curriculums. Please reconsider these reforms. If people have the option to give either with or without DGR status, I think the average Australian would ultimately lean towards choosing those with tax deductibility. As such you are making it harder for these volunteers to do their valuable work. Australia can do better than this.</p>

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524	As numerous studies have demonstrated, special religious education is critical to the wellbeing of our children and to our broader society. As such, it is essential that it continues. It is therefore necessary that any steps to remove the tax deductions available on donations to charities that support SRE are strongly opposed. It would be a disaster for Australia if SRE was damaged, or destroyed.
525	I'm concerned about what these suggested DGR reforms will mean for Australia. By removing DGR status from Religious Education, you are placing undue financial pressure on a system that actually represents Australia's largest weekly volunteer group. I don't understand why this wasn't taken into account in your report, when you articulate that the government wants to double giving (finances and volunteering) by 2030. Your reforms, and this goal, seem to be at odds. With the current cost of living pressures, I think we should make it easier for people to give money and volunteer, not harder. Religious Education in schools is supported by Australia's largest weekly group of volunteers. Surely this is a sign of how important this is, and that the DGR status is needed to help maintain their support and quality curriculums. Please reconsider these reforms. If people have the option to give either with or without DGR status, I think the average Australian would ultimately lean towards choosing those with tax deductibility. As such you are making it harder for these volunteers to do their valuable work. Australia can do better than this.
526	As a grandparent and a volunteer sre teacher, I would ask for the tax deductability to remain, so children and parents can choose to have religious freedom.
527	As an SRE teacher we are so valuable to the school community for many unchurched children to learn about Jesus. Donations allows this work to continue and them to have access to free Bibles. Please don't stop it !
528	To whom it may concern, I am writing in response to reading the draft report. My children attend a government school and a key part of their holistic education is the spiritual education they receive in SRE. This key part of their education (Education Act 1990) is not funded by the school but instead by volunteers and generous donors. So I ask the Productivity Commission to reconsider removing DGR status of charities (such as Scripture Union) who fill the funding gap between what is our children's right to learn at school and what is directly funded by government.
529	I very much value Special Religious Education in Government Schools. The large and committed volunteer labor force that runs this contributes to the lives of the children who attend and gives families in Government schools the opportunity to access special religious education. Already we are loosing children to the private system. Our state schools should not be missing out further. These people are volunteers but resources for the children to use and training should be tax-deductible. Faith communities have been shown to contribute to community and mental health and I do not want to see government support reduced. Where faith communities are able to support SRE teaching and/ or chaplaincy in government schools this has been shown to benefit the school community and provides the school one more member of staff who cares about and contributes to the lives of the students. This is often in disadvantaged areas. I would prefer Government support increased and certainly do not want to see it reduced.
530	If the government removes tax deductibility, it will have a profound impact on the ability of low-fee, faith based schools to raise much-needed funds. I am totally against the government who should be protecting Religious freedom trying to get rid of much needed funding for faith based schools. Labor are teetering on the edge of the cliff and need to listen to the majority of Australian Citizens or face the peril of woke irrelevant. Enough is enough stop 🚫 your irresponsibility and incompetence now.
531	In appreciation of the Special Religious Education within Government Schools, and the largest weekly volunteer labour force in Australia that enables this to happen – I am asking the government to maintain or increase their support for this, not reduce it. I therefore want DGR status to be maintained for religious education in government

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	schools. Also I would love to see volunteers within the faith communities recognised within the DGR system. I really appreciate the community-wide benefits that people from all faith communities bring.
532	Please retain tax deductions for Religious Instruction in Government Schools as it is such an important aspect of our children's spiritual growth and understanding of the world.
533	I strongly disagree with proposed changes to the DGR status of school building funds and special religious education in Government Schools. Deductible gifts is the only way some smaller schools can implement building programs. And religious education is important for our children to receive a well-rounded education. The largest weekly volunteer labour force in Australia provides religious education in schools. Our government should be increasing support for this, not reducing it. DGR status should be maintained for religious education in government schools and for school building funds. With so much unrest and uncertainty in the world today, there has never been a more important time for faith communities to help re-build hope in our youth
534	Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little "community-wide benefit" and would encourage you, even if you don't have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result.
535	Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a

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536	<p>Please keep DGR status for Special Religious Education. It is a huge community benefit because students learn accurate information instead of making assumptions based on the loudest voices around them and online radicals. 60% of Australians follow a religion and we are a huge part of volunteering in the Australian community and giving to charitable causes. Religion is not to be feared. SRE provides a voice into our government schools that is otherwise silenced and removing DGR status from SRE would lead to this voice being cancelled from many high schools.</p>
537	<p>I believe support of Religious Education in Schools should continue to be encouraged through deductibility to encourage balanced education to ensure students have the opportunity to consider wider values and beliefs.</p>
538	<p>The Christian faith is the bedrock of Australian society, and rightly so. We as Australians must be encouraged to support the Christian faith in monetary terms to contribute to the institutions that care for, provides for and sustains so many.</p>
539	<p>I loved the impact that scripture Union had for me as a kid. It is part of what has shaped me today. A working mother to 5 beautiful children. I want the same to be available for them and their soon to be friends in the community. You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I</p>

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540	Dear Commissioner Having been a voluntary SRE teacher for several years, and experiencing the joy that students exhibit during their lessons, I believe that SRE should be encouraged in our public schools and their DGR status remain in place to encourage giving. SRE is about spiritual belief but it is also about wellbeing, treating every person with dignity and respect, learning about moral attitudes that they may or may not receive in the home. It is 30 minutes which is valuable time given freely to our schools and must have a positive impact, both on students and teachers but also financially. Please do not remove the DGR status which encourages philanthropic giving into this vital community service. Kind regards, Carmen Cudmore
541	Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union’s ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools. As a mother, grandmother and ex religious education teacher in the primary school sector, I would like to see RE continue in Australian schools. To be successful in this the DGR needs to remain. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation’s largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government’s goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, now you are discussing removing the DGR, which will significantly reduce the ability to teach RE in the schools. Every person has a right to make their own choices in regard to their beliefs. But first they need to be informed to be able to make that decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia’s fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don’t have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result.
542	I am glad the Productivity Commission desires to grow philanthropic giving in Australia as the current given has done a great amount of good. However, I am concerned about the new changes in the Federal Government’s Productivity Commission draft report – and the threat it contains to the removal of tax deductibility for initiatives such as Special Religious Education in Government Schools and the tax deductibility of school building funds. If the government desires to grow charitable and philanthropic giving, why is it choosing to make it harder for people to give? The government school (Public Schools) cannot do without the religious schools and the work they do at a fraction of the cost per student as compared to the cost for a student in the Public sector. Given their excellent track record, why would you make it more challenging for them to construct necessary buildings and why would you target Religious Educators (predominantly Christians)?
543	Re: Draft Recommendation 6.1 The recommendation states that DGR should expressly exclude items related to 1. religious education; 2. childcare/aged care; and 3. advancing religion. This sort of recommendation is outside the scope of the terms of reference which was to identify opportunities to increase giving. The exclusion of

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	organisations/funds/activities currently eligible as deductible gift recipients will have the impact of a reduction in giving. The report takes particular aim at school building funds. The more cash that can be flowed into buildings the better (both public and private schools). If a tax deduction is on offer people will double their gift amount hence the building can be twice as good.
544	I am greatly disturbed to think that you have so little knowledge of just what SRE is achieving in our schools. Having taught in primary schools for 12 years and dealt with many children in that time, I have seen first hand, just how they are affected by what they learn, and their parents must be too, since they continue to approve their attendance. You must ensure that the government recognizes and values, the contribution of faith communities to Australian society.
545	To grow philanthropic giving in Australia, it would be detrimental to stop tax deductible status for Scripture in Schools. This ability supports already struggling families (who the tax reform is meant to be helping) to give, why would we take this ability away? Families who send children to Scripture in government schools do so because they want to and give their permission for children to attend classes. There are many families in my local church who have become members of church through Scripture. This is a good thing for the wellbeing of families and communities as people connect with other parents, kids make friends, and supports like meals/social gathering and spiritual growth are received every week. I would like to know why philanthropic giving is being targeted for tax cuts when this inquiry is trying to encourage it? Thankyou for the opportunity to comment.
546	Re: Draft recommendation 9.3 The impacts of the recommendation for listed companies to publicly report ITEMISED information on "money, goods and time" donated to DGR's has been made without any evidence of whether this will have a positive or negative impact. The requirement to report "time" donated is particularly onerous as a listed company would have to create a separate reporting system (as this data is not captured in a HR or accounting system).
547	It is hard to believe that systems that bring only the good side of life to notice is to be penalised. Our society needs more positivity and this can be introduced through the teaching of religious principles. e.g. "Love your neighbour as you love yourself." This type of teaching could transform our society and ultimately save the government more than the cost of the tax deductions given at present. Think again before bringing in this change.
548	The terms of reference were against the backdrop of the Government wanting to double philanthropic giving. Overall the draft report misses the mark with the only recommendations in the report being: 4.1 Remove \$2 threshold. 6.1 Expand DGR scope, but prohibit religious, childcare and aged care purposes and limit government entities 6.2 Require ACNC to assess subtypes & define what a PBI is. 7.1 Remove 'basic religious charity' from ACNC Act 7.2 ACNC Act changes re "federally regulated entities"; evidence of asset transfers on windup; extend enforcement powers, publish non-compliance and referrals. 7.3 ACNC Act changes creating binding ruling scheme 7.4 Establish a National Charity Regulators Forum and intergovernmental agreement 7.5 All levels of government to adopt measures to mitigate adverse effects on volunteer participation in program design 8.1 Distribution rates for ancillary fund changes 9.1 Australian Government/ACNC/ATO to publish certain data 9.2 Australian Government to develop a statement of expectations (re ACNC charity register) 9.3 Listed companies to disclose donations to DGR (money, assets, time) 9.4 ACNC to require charities to report income from bequests 9.5 ABS to capture volunteer information on census 10.1 Establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander philanthropic foundation Of the 14 individual recommendations there are only 3 that might actually have any impact on donations which are: 1. Removing the \$2 threshold. (although unlikely to actually increase donations as \$2 is a very low threshold). 2. Expanding the DGR scope enabling more organisations to be eligible. Although any increase from donations will then be reduced by a decrease in donations from the proposed prohibited types that currently are DGR eligible. 3. Creating the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander philanthropic foundation.

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549	I personally disagree with the Australian Government Productivity Commission's recommendations that "charities that have DGR status for school building funds or to provide religious education in government schools" have their DGR status withdrawn. As someone who has volunteered as a Special Religious Education teacher, I've seen how SRE enriches students' understanding of religious world views and provides a space to ask questions and discuss beliefs, as well as creating spaces for like-minded individuals to meet, like lunch time groups. Removing tax deductible status from these services could have a significant impact on the funding of Special Religious Education programs, making it more challenging to continue providing essential religious education to students in government schools for their elected religion.
550	Dear Productivity Commission, Please continue to grant DGR status to religious education organisations and religious schools. Religious education providers have a tangible impact on the wellbeing of students and are often funded through donations. Special Religious Education providers in NSW rely heavily on donations to maintain their presence in public schools. Despite protests from many, a large percentage of parents want their children to have access to Special Religious Education and value its contribution to the education system and students themselves. Similarly, low fee Christian schools are often supported by donations from families when constructing new buildings. These facilities continue to benefit communities for generations. Rather than making it more difficult for religious organisations to build educational infrastructure why wouldn't the government seek to encourage such endeavours if it is funded by private donors? Please maintain the DGR status for religious education facilities and providers.
551	Dear Commissioners I am deeply disappointed that your Commission is considering denying tax deductibility to donations to organisations providing religious education. Religious education has been provided in government run schools for many years asking no direct funding from government but relying on dedicated teachers, often voluntary, who model decency and moral values to the students. I would underline the value of religious education in these respects: 1. At a time when electronic media are impacting young people's lives and causing emotional and psychological problems to some, a religious faith can provide stability and a positive outlook. 2. Religious education (SRE) teachers in my acquaintance are people of high moral integrity who would be good role models for the students. 3. Removal of tax deductibility status would severely impact the provision of religious education in schools, denying the opportunity for students to learn about a faith-based life as opposed to a purely secular approach - in effect closing one learning option. 4. Teachers of religious education in my experience and knowledge are now well trained and observe standards of teaching require by government. They are no longer untrained. 5. To remove tax deductible status from donations for religious education purposes is in effect to give weight to a secular view of the world which devalues religion. I hope you will reconsider this proposal. Yours sincerely Julie Sekhon (M J M Sekhon)
552	It is extremely important and vital to continue recognising in the public space the positive contribution of faith communities for many decades through well respected authorised organisations like Scripture Union that are overwhelmingly volunteer based where donations help to encourage this so children have an opportunity to make up their own minds on matters crucial to their self esteem and well being. I am shocked that in an age when so many children and families are struggling with well being, faith seems to be targeted for exclusion from the public space. Moves like this to reduce the impact of donations here will only drive more families to leave the public education system. My own children and grandchildren have benefited from the wider input that Scripture Union has helped provide and I am aware of many other families positively impacted, many who otherwise would not have received this option. I hope for the sake of children and families being given wholistic options to make informed choices that benefit themselves and consequently the wider community when they have a larger narrative to inform and build resilience that these proposals to change tax deductibility will not proceed. Thank you for the opportunity to give feedback.
553	Schools religious education is an important asset to government schools. All children have a spiritual aspect to their health, and religious education is one way children are encouraged to grow in this area. It is important in helping children to develop a balanced worldview and to be tolerant and contributing citizens in their community. Many

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	<p>children desire to connect with their spiritual selves but are unsure how to go about it. Schools religious education is a vital and safe way of facilitating this. I personally have also heard numerous reports of teenagers or adults who had received prior religious education in their school, and in a moment of crisis (some of which involved suicidal plans), recalled what they had learned in their religious education and were able to apply this and/or reach out to someone from a church or similar, and be restored to better mental/emotional/relational health. It is vital that this important program is given every opportunity to flourish, with as much funding as possible. Therefore, retaining DGR status is necessary to allow maximum donations to support the program.</p>
554	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may be aware that Scripture Union NSW organizes lunchtime groups in Government Schools Such groups impact 2,000 students weekly and are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry. For this reason I am deeply troubled by the Government Productivity Commission's recent draft report, especially some of the recommendations it makes for reforms to the DGR system. In particular, the recommendation to remove DGR status from religious charities such as Scripture Union NSW who do significant volunteer work regularly in schools. I believe that in the current chaotic social environment this change would deleteriously affect the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Although Australia is a multicultural nation -- and should welcome diversity --- approximately 60% of Australians identify with some religious tradition that offers stable meaning, understanding, and possibilities for tolerance within a fractured world. The draft report, however, seems to presume that religious understandings (whether Christian or otherwise) provide no community-wide benefit. One of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through tolerant religious education in schools - something we are currently greatly in need of. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report that, on the one hand, articulates the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, you are, on the other hand, removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. That is shortsighted. As well, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – this is what our communities want - and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? The draft report penalises both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and puts undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. Extremism can develop anywhere, but currently supported institutions can be vehicles for social solidarity and tolerance. “Community-wide benefit” is just what many of these current initiatives provide, and I would ask to to consider how removal of DGR status will allow ideological extremists to flourish. Please reconsider withdrawing funding from these valuable charities.</p>
555	<p>Please consider my deeply held concerns. Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union's ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In</p>

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	<p>short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don’t have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result. This is vital for the good of all our communities.</p>
556	<p>Please don't take away DGR status from religious institutions.</p>
557	<p>This review appears to be of an ideological nature and could be reconstructed for a different outcome. For those with PAF's who are required to donate to those with DGR status the proposals seem to limit this opportunity while indicating a desire to grow philanthropy! In the area of SRE, it is well known that a healthy adult needs to be well cared for physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. The importance of SRE and chaplains is well demonstrated. Those who deliver SRE are the largest or second largest volunteer community we have but require the tools and training to do their job. This is an area where people with modest means can contribute to the social cohesion of the country. Unless Government wishes to deny the value of SRE, it is suggested that this community good comes at little Government expense. In the case of school building funds, I have been to State Schools with brilliant newish facilities funded by taxpayers in general. I know that parents in the growing non-government sector are in effect subsidizing other general taxpayers with donations to school building funds. And by no means are they all "rich" people or people of faith. Claiming that those donating to these funds means that they are donating to themselves is a spurious argument. I know that given the time and effort required to raise funds, timing of construction etc., many donors may never get to experience the fruit of their philanthropy or may do so only for a brief period. In my experience philanthropy is about people identifying opportunities to make a difference. Why is the Productivity Commission trying to control people who want to make a difference?</p>
558	<p>I am concerned that removing the tax deduction status of giving to SRE will negatively impact the ongoing delivery of this program in our public schools. Studies have shown the benefits of SRE to children and school communities. I and others give to the work of SRE because of the impact it has in our community. Should its DGR status be changed, people are highly unlikely to redirect their donations to other organisations. So rather than growing philanthropic giving, the suggestion in the draft report would conceivably see giving reduced.</p>
559	<p>Thanks for the opportunity to comment. I want to express how valuable I think Special Religious Education is within Government Schools, and I know it has the largest weekly volunteer labour force in Australia that enables this to happen. Please I urge the government to at least maintain or ideally increase support for this, not reduce it. SRE ministries are providing support and care to individual students and whole school communities that are irreplaceable and vital. I also please ask that DGR status to be maintained for religious education in government schools. It is also important for volunteers within the faith communities to be recognised within the DGR system. At a personal level I have benefitted from these wonderful programs as a school student in primary and high school in the past, and have also been a volunteer as an adult. I want to continue supporting such initiatives with donations and of money and time, and urge you to continue and increase support. Overall, I think you need to recognise the amazing community-wide benefits that faith-based groups and communities provide in our nation, and the value that so many Australians place on these groups and activities.</p>
560	<p>We are extremely concerned that the Australian Government Productivity Commission has recommended that those who provide Special Religious Education (SRE) in government schools have their Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status withdrawn. Why would the government seek out this vital representation of Christian values as a means of propping their budget? If SRE is reduced or phased out because of such a DGR withdrawal, students will be deprived of the encouragement to live purposeful</p>

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	lives of truth and value. Does the government not see what is happening with youth crime and psychological harm increasing rapidly? We urge you to reconsider this backward step which would result in minimising the impact of generous citizens' donations to support SRE in government schools. A lot of good is at stake here, likewise a lot of votes.
561	Dear Commissioners, Please reconsider your decision to withdraw support for SRE in government schools. As a student at Jannali High School, I was greatly impacted by SRE, along with many peers. SRE gave me a bigger purpose for life, which helped me put my studies in perspective, reduced anxiety and helped me to do well at school and achieve results I wouldn't have without faith and the support of a faith community at school. It would be very hard for these groups to continue to provide this vital support to students without you.
562	I am very concerned that you are planning to remove tax deductions for donations to Religious charities in support of SRE. The work that SRE does in schools is unparalleled compared to any other voluntary work in our Society. The number of faithful teachers who teach as volunteers each week is massive. Faith is fundamental to our Society and to target faith based teaching in this way is to ignore the positive impact it has on our young people. For many students the SRE lesson is the one place where they are valued, listened to, taught what is right and wrong and given hope and encouragement in a safe, multicultural environment. As a teacher of SRE for 30 years, I have seen lives changed and built wonderful relationships with students who often are struggling in normal home and school settings. Charitable donations are essential if this work is to continue and tax deductibility makes a massive difference to those who give. People value this work and want to see it continue, their faith motivates their giving. I want the Government to recognise and value the contribution faith communities make to Australian society.
563	The Productivity Commission has been asked to analyse motivations for philanthropic giving in Australia and identify opportunities to grow it further. I find the statement that you want philanthropic giving to increase and yet you are suggesting DGR be removed from religious institutions. Religious institutions were behind philanthropic giving in the first place and continue to work in the community to today. What is the cost to government (more precisely, taxpayers) if religious institutions are forced to close their doors? For example will the Public Schools be able to cope with the increased numbers following the forced closure of religious schools?
564	Dear Commissioner, I'm concerned about what these suggested reforms will mean for Australia – and hope there is room within this process not just to comment on their outworking, but to change what they are proposed to be. Research shows very clearly that Religious Education provides strong community-wide benefits because it helps diffuse racial and religious tensions. It enables instruction to be within a monitored environment – as opposed to either be non-existent and fed by radical events in the media, or for education to be outworked by radical content online. By removing DGR status, you are placing undue financial pressure on a system that actually represents Australia's largest weekly volunteer group. I don't understand why this wasn't taken into account in your report, when you articulate that the government wants to double giving (finances and volunteering) by 2030. Your reforms, and this goal, seem to be at odds. 60% of the population in Australia does, and Australia is the most multicultural community on earth. Social cohesion is therefore hugely important in Australia – and religious education is well-researched to build this. This IS a community-wide benefit – and yet religion in your report appears to be treated otherwise. I am also concerned about the pressure your reforms will place on school building funds. Faith-based education is the fastest growing sector of education – it is what Australians are increasingly turning to. Funding for these schools is mainly through fees and donations. I think the government SHOULD provide more support – not be taking it away. DGR mechanisms enable the people of Australia to donate and fund some of our education system themselves. Sincerely Robyn Hicks
565	Dear Commissioners, We are concerned by the draft report and proposed reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. However, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW and Youthworks, both

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	<p>which have contributed positively to society by investing in the wellbeing of people. The proposed changes will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education. Australia is a multicultural nation, with approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools. Putting extra pressure on religious education and its teachers is a poor decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. Evidenced based education programs have been developed, with significant support/training provided, to ensure volunteer teachers deliver a high-quality lesson that benefit school communities. We have both benefited from School Scripture in our formative years. Additionally, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia's fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? It seems you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. We completely reject the presumption that these initiatives are of little 'community-wide benefit' and would encourage you to reflect, even if you don't have a religious belief yourself, and understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage Multicultural Australia as a result. Yours sincerely, R & C</p>
566	<p>Dear Productivity Commission, I'm saddened to learn about the consideration of removing DGR status for school building funds and providing religious education in public schools. Both are very important for students, and there are very limited or no resources available from the government supporting either activity. If you pass that, you are creating more problems for the next generation. Schools will not have enough money to expand or re-build, and cutting religious education will make Australia look like a totalitarian country. Please reject the proposal. Thank you.</p>
567	<p>SRE/CRI programs in government schools have proven student wellbeing benefits and contribute positively to the school community There is an intrinsic link between formative religious instruction in childhood years and religious service in adult years, and the community-wide benefits of this Christian service The removal of DGR status for giving to religious instruction in government schools will significantly impact organisations responsible for the delivery of quality SRE/CRI programs My giving as is motivated purely by my faith and not motivate by any financial benefits.</p>
568	<p>Dear Federal Government's Productivity Commission, I would like to urge you not to proceed with the proposed removal of DGR status and tax deductibility for initiatives such as Special Religious Education in Government Schools – AND the tax deductibility of school building funds. There is growing evidence that people of faith communities are more likely to volunteer their time and assistance to benefit both others and the general community as a whole. People of faith are more charitable when giving time and volunteering service, in the order of 25% more likelihood than the secular community. And the government provides only a fraction of capital funding for buildings and facilities of faith based schools. Whereas complete capital funding is provided for all government schools despite small faith based schools missing out.</p>
569	<p>We live in a time of great challenges that cause many young people today feel vulnerable. We need programmes that will encourage and lift up the hearts of many young people today and this is what scripture and religious values can do today. The finances for this needs encouragement so to have the tax deductions for this is an encouragement and supportive of positive faith based programs for our future generations. We need to continue with the Deductible Gift Recipient status for faith based schools and organisations that support scripture in schools.</p>
570	<p>I'm concerned about what these suggested DGR reforms will mean for Australia. Research shows very clearly that Religious Education provides strong community-wide benefits because it helps diffuse racial and religious tensions. It enables instruction to be within a monitored environment – as opposed to either be non-existent and fed by</p>

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	<p>radical events in the media, or for education to be outworked by radical content online. By removing DGR status from Religious Education, you are placing undue financial pressure on a system that actually represents Australia's largest weekly volunteer group. I don't understand why this wasn't taken into account in your report, when you articulate that the government wants to double giving (finances and volunteering) by 2030. Your reforms, and this goal, seem to be at odds. 60% of the population in Australia has connection to a religion, and Australia is the most multicultural community on earth. Social cohesion is therefore hugely important in Australia – and religious education is well-researched to build this. This IS a community-wide benefit – and yet religion in your report appears to be treated otherwise. With the current cost of living pressures, I think we should make it easier for people to give money and volunteer, not harder. Religious Education in schools is supported by Australia's largest weekly group of volunteers. Surely this is a sign of how important this is, and that the DGR status is needed to help maintain their support and quality curriculums. Please reconsider these reforms. If people have the option to give either with or without DGR status, I think the average Australian would ultimately lean towards choosing those with tax deductibility. As such you are making it harder for these volunteers to do their valuable work. Australia can do better than this.</p>
571	<p>I am very concerned about the Australian Government Productivity Commission's recommendation that "charities that have DGR status for school building funds or to provide religious education in government schools" have their DGR status withdrawn. My understanding is that students who attend faith-based schools cost the government significantly less to educate than students in public schools. One key reason for this is that the government provides all the funding for buildings and infrastructure for public schools, whereas faith-based schools contribute a significant amount themselves. Having DGR status for building funds for faith-based schools obviously encourages donations, and so contributes to enabling such schools to be opened and to keep operating. If this DGR status were to be withdrawn, presumably it would result in fewer faith-based schools opening and even lead to some established ones closing. As such, more students would be in public schools, increasing government costs. As such, from a financial point of view, removing DGR status from such schools seems counterproductive for the government. Additionally, people connected with faith-based schools contribute a significant amount of time volunteering, not only benefiting the schools but their communities. I also object to the recommendation that charities which provide religious in schools, have their DGR status withdrawn. My understanding is that Special Religious Education (SRE) in government schools provides well-researched social benefits for young people and society as a whole. As such this withdrawal of DGR status would also be counterproductive. Thus, I think it is important for the government to maintain DGR status for religious charities, school building funds and SRE in government schools.</p>
572	<p>As a supporter of scripture being taught in our High and Primary Schools, I'm disappointed with the draft document where the Federal Government is proposing to take away tax deductibility of funding for SRE teachers. You may not be aware of the benefits which the SRE teachers bring to a class of students. Their lessons present a God who loves them, has good plans for Hope for them, acceptance and appreciation for others. I benefited from Christian teaching in my Public schooling. It has helped me to be generous and caring. We need to continue teaching these values because we all need to have Hope in these difficult times. Sincerely, Sue McCubben</p>
573	<p>At this time with so many challenges to the mental health of children and young people SRE provides reasons for hope, and teaches compassion and care for others. It should be supported in every possible way for the good of our society.</p>
574	<p>I would like to write in support of retaining DGR status for religious organisations who provide services like chaplaincy and religious education in schools. The benefits that come from this kind of work to individuals and families are manifold and often beyond measure. The government is wise to maintain as much support as possible for such groups that make real impact in our communities.</p>
575	<p>Dear Sir/Madam, I'm extremely concerned at the move to remove DGR status from charities providing religious education in government schools. You will receive other submissions with links to evidence of the benefits of religious education, so I will limit comments here to my own personal experience. I am a health professional that works</p>

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	<p>across a range of roles in primary and tertiary health care, clinical governance and health policy. Two of them are specifically focused on frequent utilisers of healthcare services, such as emergency departments and ambulance services (Planned Care for Better Health, ED to Community - https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/integratedcare/Pages/key-initiatives.aspx). In my experience, patients that are frequent utilisers of healthcare services - which in one case involves calling the ambulance service up to six times every day - typically share distressingly common backgrounds of childhood trauma/sexual abuse/neglect, substance dependence, chronic pain and mental health disorders. They are frequently already connected to multiple health and welfare agencies. But they are still searching for something that they are not getting. It is my very strong impression that a great deal of what underpins where these patients have arrived at is a sense of low self-worth and disconnection - that they are not loved, and not worthy to be loved. These concepts of self start to form in early childhood and have far-reaching impacts on a person's life (https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/kidsfamilies/programs/Pages/first-2000-days.aspx). It is a common experience that a few words spoken in genuine care and kindness can have a lasting impact on the individual. For me, a single sentence spoken to me in kind encouragement by my Year 11 English teacher is a cherished memory that I still return to at times when I question my self-worth. I think that religious education provides not just education about a particular "brand" of religion, but is fundamentally an opportunity for a student to hear from an early age that they are loved for who they are - by a deity if they choose to believe that one exists - but also by the volunteer who is giving up their time to not just tell them about said deity, but also show them by their actions, attitude and kind words that they are deeply cared for. Will every religious education volunteer be able to do this well? No, of course not - in the same way, not every primary school teacher will be all that they could be to a child. Will every child get exposure to this? No, many parents will choose otherwise. But what I think religious education provides is at least one more opportunity for a child to hear and feel that they are worthy and that they are loved. I think the financial investment via DGR status is relatively small for the potential impact of this, and it's why I continue to invest two or three hours to this cause every week. Thank you for your time and your kind consideration.</p>
576	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, benefiting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union NSW's ministry programs and in turn contribute to the greater good of Australian society. When I was in primary school in Epping NSW, some 20 years ago, I benefitted greatly by scripture classes which helped me explore deep questions—questions about life, faith, God—which most children wrestle with from time to time. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is commendable that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, reducing red tape, and simplifying the current system. However, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and wellbeing of current and future students engaged in Special Religious Education (SRE) and lunchtime groups. Australia is one of the most multicultural nations on earth, and over 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on a misguided ideology that suggests religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that religious education in schools is one of the best ways to promote social cohesion. Both religious and non-religious parents choose to place their children in SRE. Putting extra pressure on religious education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications for our society. The SRE teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double philanthropic giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. Thanks for your consideration in this matter.</p>
577	<p>I am opposed to any change to DRG in relation to school building funds, SRE etc. i am a former Board member of a Christian school, and see the value of providing choice for parents, and can see the benefits of such education. Please do not remove or restrict DGR.</p>

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578	<p>I would like to comment on the draft report concerning reforms to the DGR system. I am opposed to removing the tax deductible contributions for many reasons , but mainly because the organisations, and especially many church and religious organisations that support so many people, will see their funding dramatically reduced. Many of these organisations are already experiencing reduction in current income as people struggle with increased cost of living and have to reduce their DGR to these groups. One of the areas which this will impact is in schools. I was very much involved in my school ISCF group, which is supported by Scripture Union. I found this to be a highly beneficial system, and it still is many years after I have left school. The huge impact these groups have in helping the students within the schools can never be underestimated. I personally assisted many students in my year as leader of my ISCF group and one of my fellow students who I mentored while in that school lunchtime group became (and still is) a prominent TV and music presenter today.He reminded me many years after we had left school how important that ISCF group had been to his advancement in life. I also benefitted in my personal and professional career significantly because of this group at school. Losing this funding, to groups such as Scripture Union , will deprive our school students of the mentoring and guidance they desperately need today , to build our future society to the better. I think funding should be increased to these organisations. I believe that donations to schools building funds is essential as this takes pressure off the government to supply those extra facilities that students need. We need to be looking at ways of building this social cohesion , not remove it. In particular , SRE teachers in schools need more support. Many are volunteers . Removing this simple method of assisting well established and time proven organisations such as Scripture Union and SRE in schools will be detrimental in so many ways. I hope my brief comments express my strong intent that removing the DGR from religious and church associated organisations is a negative move and it should not be proceeded with. Yours Faithfully Dr Stuart Wolf. (I am recently retired from 40 years as a dental professional. In those 40 years I was able to contribute significantly to schools,ISCF, Scripture Union and countless other organisations through the DGR system. Without it, my contributions would have been less). As I continue to support and encourage those groups, I am now not able to receive a tax deduction on my giving, but I do know that for many of my friends who do give, this will seriously impact them if this DGR is not maintained int he future .</p>
579	<p>It is so important that the DGR status be maintained in schools and for religious organizations. Many people give up valuable time to volunteer for SRE and they should be acknowledged and assisted rather than making it harder for this to happen when funds are decreased or cancelled. We only have to look at society now to see the decline that has occurred over the last years after prayers and God was omitted from schools. Anxiety and depression in young people has increased so learning to live God's way and not a secular way is so beneficial for people and will also assist in there mental health and well being. Please reconsider and fund this important ministry.</p>
580	<p>I would like the current status of DGR for SRE, school buildings etc to remain. I am convinced of the value of such education, and the provision of choice for parents</p>
581	<p>Having Scripture Union funded ISCF in my public school was a watering hole of friendship and pause amidst the stresses of learning. It was paramount in the rhythm of life and gave me hope and encouragement to keep going. With funding levels withdrawn this will have devastating long term effects for generations to come.</p>
582	<p>Dear Commissioners I am concerned about proposed changes to the DGR system. As a former high school teacher in public education I have been able to witness the positive impact of Christian groups operating at lunch times. These groups, supported by Scripture Union, provide a safe and nurturing environment for all students to share their lives and often help each other through hard times. The positive flow on effect into the wider school community is significant. Religious education in schools is also important to encourage open discussion and cohesion in society. These activities are threatened by your proposed changes. Organisations such as Scripture Union, with their very large number of volunteers, need all the financial support they can get. Please reconsider the impact your changes to the DGR system will have and instead work to better support organisations such as SU.</p>

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583	<p>I write as one who has been involved for many years with several Public Benevolent Institutions (DGRs) and am concerned that the recommendations of the Productivity Commission have singled out a couple of faith-based institutions for delisting as PBIs. The reason seems to be that they do not contribute significant public benefit. In particular I mention Special Religious Education in public schools. This is an institution that utilises the services (unpaid) of our nation's largest group of weekly volunteers and makes a significant contribution to the health and wellbeing of students engaged in Special Religious Education (SRE) and also lunchtime groups. Research shows that religious education in schools is one of the best ways to promote social cohesion. Both religious and non-religious parents choose to place their children in SRE. Making religious education more difficult to support is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications for our society. I ask you to reconsider this unwise recommendation.</p>
584	<p>I support the push towards encouraging Australians to be more philanthropic. However I'm concerned about the charities who will have their DGR status removed, particularly those who produce material for Special Religious Education in our schools. SRE has a positive effect on children from all walks of faith and the right for SRE should not be removed from them or made more difficult for them to access due to the changes outlined in this proposed bill.</p>
585	<p>Religious education is so important to a young person's normal life as they do not receive any other information about Christianity and or a relationship about a relationship with their maker - God. this gives them a hope to look forward to and a secure life. Nothing else matter, so to take this opportunity away from them could encourage instability in their lives with nothing else that matters.</p>
586	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, benefiting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union NSW's ministry programs and in turn contribute to the greater good of Australian society. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is commendable that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, reducing red tape, and simplifying the current system. However, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and wellbeing of current and future students engaged in Special Religious Education (SRE) and lunchtime groups. Australia is one of the most multicultural nations on earth, and over 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on a misguided ideology that suggests religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that religious education in schools is one of the best ways to promote social cohesion. Both religious and non-religious parents choose to place their children in SRE. Putting extra pressure on religious education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications for our society. The SRE teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double philanthropic giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision.</p>
587	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, benefiting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union NSW's ministry programs and in turn contribute to the greater good of Australian society. I am extremely concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is commendable that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, reducing red tape, and simplifying the current system. However, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and wellbeing of current and future students engaged in Special Religious Education (SRE) and lunchtime groups. Australia is one of the most multicultural nations on earth, and over 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on a misguided ideology that suggests religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that religious education in schools is one of the best ways to promote social cohesion. Both religious and non-religious parents choose to place their children in SRE. Putting</p>

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	<p>extra pressure on religious education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications for our society. The SRE teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double philanthropic giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision.</p>
588	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, benefiting approximately 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union NSW's ministry programs and in turn contribute to the greater good of Australian society. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is great that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, reducing red tape, and simplifying the current system. However, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and wellbeing of current and future students engaged in Special Religious Education (SRE) and lunchtime groups. As someone who has benefited myself from these groups and seen countless others I am very worried. Your report seems to suggest that religion is of no community wide benefit despite the fact that over 60% Of Austrliains identify with a religion and that religious education in schools is one of the best ways to promote social cohesion. As someone who teaches SRE in my local primary school I know both religious and non-religious parents choose to place their children in SRE. Putting extra pressure on religious education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications for our society. The SRE teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double philanthropic giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision.</p>
589	<p>Sample response (400 words) Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, benefiting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union NSW's ministry programs and in turn contribute to the greater good of Australian society. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is commendable that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, reducing red tape, and simplifying the current system. However, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and wellbeing of current and future students engaged in Special Religious Education (SRE) and lunchtime groups. Australia is one of the most multicultural nations on earth, and over 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on a misguided ideology that suggests religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that religious education in schools is one of the best ways to promote social cohesion. Both religious and non-religious parents choose to place their children in SRE. Putting extra pressure on religious education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications for our society. The SRE teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double philanthropic giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. Kind Regards Keith Griffiths</p>
590	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, benefiting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union NSW's ministry programs and in turn contribute to the greater good of Australian society. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is commendable that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, reducing red tape, and simplifying the current system. However, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and wellbeing of current and future students engaged in Special Religious Education (SRE) and lunchtime groups. I personally teach SRE and have for over 20 years. I have seen the positive</p>

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	<p>impact it has had on individuals and the school community as a whole (especially when tragic loss struck the school). Australia is one of the most multicultural nations on earth, and over 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on a misguided ideology that suggests religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that religious education in schools is one of the best ways to promote social cohesion. Both religious and non-religious parents choose to place their children in SRE. Putting extra pressure on religious education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications for our society. The SRE teachers in Australia represent our nation’s largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government’s goal to double philanthropic giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision.</p>
591	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, impacting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union’s ministry programs. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is good that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, such as animal welfare. Still, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and well-being of current and future students engaged in religious education and lunchtime groups. Scripture Union’s lunchtime program of Interschool Christian Fellowship (ISCF) helped me through a very troubled teenage life where the family dynamics at home were less than perfect. My being able to attend this group and find a safe place that accepted me for who I was has made me part of who I am today. Which four grown children that have been through the public education system they too can attest to the great friendships that are formed through this organisation. Australia is the most multicultural nation; approximately 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on an ideology that religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that one of the best ways to promote social cohesion is through religious education in schools – putting extra pressure on this education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications. The Religious Education teachers in Australia represent our nation’s largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government’s goal to double giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision. On top of that, school building funds are to have their DGR status removed. Faith-based education is Australia’s fastest-growing education sector – which tells us that this is what our communities want and are actively using. So why make it harder for this to happen and be successful? In short, you are penalising both the fastest-growing sector of education – predominantly privately funded by citizens – and putting undue pressure on the largest weekly group of volunteers in Australia, risking a lower level of social cohesion as a result. I think you and I can do a lot better than this. In light of everything I have stated above, I completely reject your presumption that these initiatives are of little “community-wide benefit” and would encourage you, even if you don’t have a religious belief yourself, to understand that your report is discriminatory and minimising in its ideology – and that this will damage a Multicultural Australia as a result.</p>
592	<p>It would be completely wrong to take something like this away. Organisations like Scripture Union do so much good for the community, they help lift kids who have never been shown love. What it means to be valued and loved, God commands that you as the government He has installed to all you can to protect the poor and vulnerable. You must allow organisations like Scripture Union to keep their status.</p>
593	<p>As a committed Christian and one who has taught Scripture in the schools for many years, I know the enthusiasm with which the children receive their lessons and the benefit it is to them in learning better ways to live. This is not about conversion, but of citizenship and learning to live graciously with one another. Please do not make it more difficult to fund the effort made by so many people committed to the welfare of young people.</p>

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594	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, benefiting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union NSW's ministry programs and in turn contribute to the greater good of Australian society. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is commendable that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, reducing red tape, and simplifying the current system. However, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and wellbeing of current and future students engaged in Special Religious Education (SRE) and lunchtime groups. Australia is one of the most multicultural nations on earth, and over 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on a misguided ideology that suggests religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that religious education in schools is one of the best ways to promote social cohesion. Both religious and non-religious parents choose to place their children in SRE. Putting extra pressure on religious education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications for our society. The SRE teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double philanthropic giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision.</p>
595	<p>As a past tax-payer, I ask that you note that the monies donated to school-building funds, SRE resources, and the Youthworks organisation have already been taxed. While considering what draws community-wide support, I respectfully request that you take into account the growing numbers of parents who choose to pay extra for their child's education because of the higher standard of achievement, teacher lassroom hours and positive school atmospheres. Sadly the young people in our public schools are falling behind in Internatiional standards of numeracy, literacy and the sciences. Cripple the Private schools and you will place a huge additional strain on our stressed public school teaching staff, should many parents reluctantly re-enroll their children in State schools. I give to a number of community charities because of my Christian faith; and there are many like me, including those who recognise their advantages and understand their responsibility to care for the poor & disadvantaged.</p>
596	<p>Dear Commissioners, You may know that Scripture Union NSW runs lunchtime groups in Government Schools, benefiting 2,000 students weekly. These groups are a vital part of Scripture Union NSW's ministry programs and in turn contribute to the greater good of Australian society. I am highly concerned by the draft report and reforms to the DGR system. It is commendable that you are considering expanding the system to cover more initiatives, reducing red tape, and simplifying the current system. However, to achieve this, you are removing DGR status from religious charities like Scripture Union NSW, which will significantly impact the health and wellbeing of current and future students engaged in Special Religious Education (SRE) and lunchtime groups. Australia is one of the most multicultural nations on earth, and over 60% of Australians identify with a religion. Yet, your report seems to be based on a misguided ideology that suggests religion is of no community-wide benefit. Research shows that religious education in schools is one of the best ways to promote social cohesion. Both religious and non-religious parents choose to place their children in SRE. Putting extra pressure on religious education and its teachers is not a quality decision for Australia and will have long-term ramifications for our society. The SRE teachers in Australia represent our nation's largest weekly group of volunteers. In a report where, on the one hand, you are articulating the government's goal to double philanthropic giving (financial and volunteering) by 2030, on the other hand, you are removing privileges and help from faith communities that represent a huge proportion of the people who will help you, and are helping you right now, achieve that goal. This is not a wise decision.</p>
597	<p>We have always given at least 10% of our income to charities and churches . As do most of the Christian friends we know. There is so many great things being done around Australia and the globe by faith based NGOs including scripture in schools (which we give to). Given 49% of Australians claim to be Christians (most recent Aust</p>

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	census) Please find ways to encourage and support this enormous part of Australian people and their generous ways. Don't charge to prevent or discourage such giving please!
598	As a person who went through a government school I found scripture really helpful. It helped with my wellbeing and it allowed me to catch up with other Christians.
599	Those with a Christian faith have been noted as giving the most in both time and money to the local community, I am concerned that the commission appear to be unfairly targeting donations to Christian work. The work of SRE in schools is one of the largest volunteer groups working in the local community. In my work as congregational Church pastor and also community chaplain to marginalised groups, I can testify that many people who may not attend a church hold Christian values learned through SRE or school or church contact. They see Christian values as being important for the benefit of society as a whole, and also faith as helping their own general wellbeing. The school teachers I have met while teaching SRE have also been supportive of the benefits of these classes for their students both in life lessons and in their general behaviour. Christian schools are also of great benefit to society the parents who send their children their are not always of Christian faith, many having no faith or follow other religions but they see Christian values as a worthwhile part of their child's education.