

Submissions focussed on DGR status for schools

Submissions 278-701 to 278-846

No.	Name	Submission	Received
278-818	Stephen Sandeman	<p>I have been following with interest the report regarding the productivity commission and the recommendations included in it.</p> <p>The report has raised some concerns with me as it appears to me at the base of it is a wholesale change to the way independent and private schools have been funded for the past 50 years.</p> <p>As a founding Director of the private school where my 5, now adult children were taught, and where I was involved in DGR funding to build a successful school from scratch, I detect that if this report is allowed to gain credence the funding could be scrapped and this same school where my grandchildren now go will be squeezed out, along with all of the other very successful education institutions that have produced millions of well-educated students down the generations.</p> <p>How will the government provide alternative public education? At what cost? Funded by whom?</p> <p>I fear there is something more sinister at play here. Given that most private and independent schools have been built by and run by faith-based churches and organisations, is this a vendetta against our countries founding Christian principles and freedom of religion? One hopes we as a nation have not slidden too far into the gutter</p>	16/01/2024
278-819	Steve Joyce	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Productivity Commission's Review of Philanthropy. I would like to take this opportunity to comment on this, based on my experience and perspective.</p>	17/01/2024

No.	Name	Submission	Received
		<p>After reviewing the report, I hold grave concerns as to the impact on private schooling, aged-care (both of these services are often aligned with a faith) and churches. These seem to be adversely impacted, and perhaps even targeted, through these proposed changes.</p> <p>I write as a tax-paying Australian, committed to supporting a wide range of humanitarian charities, including poverty relief, safety for women, education, faith-based organisations and more. Many thousands of Australians are currently contributing to DGR's that are aligned with their values and beliefs. They are all no doubt motivated to do this, knowing that they have the support of the Government, through these donations being offset against their income, when they are calculating their taxable income.</p> <p>The financial structure for the organisations earmarked for this withdrawal of Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status would currently be dependent on these donations. Their business cases, viability and sustainability has been possible, because of these donations. Many other support industries also rely on this economy, including local builders and support services.</p> <p>If these donations are reduced (which they obviously would be, as donors re-evaluate their gift with after-tax (rather than pre-tax)) income in mind, the very viability of these many thousands of organisations could be thrown into jeopardy. If Private Schools seek to close the financial gap through fee increases, this could (and would) result in an exodus from the Private Schooling sector, into the already overloaded Public Schooling sector.</p> <p>With Australia growing at over 600,000 people per year¹, the need for continued values / faith-based organisations (such as aged care, churches, schools, etc) will only continue to grow. Removing DGR status from these organisations is an ill-thought through concept that should not be implemented. Please continue to allow Australian taxpayers the privilege of supporting these community-servicing organisations that are holding together the amazing, diverse fabric that is Australia.</p> <p>Thank you for taking the time to review my concerns. We look for you to now act in the best of the Australian people, by holding this funding source intact for these organisations.</p>	
278-820	David Sandeman	<p>I am a father and grandfather of children who have attended and currently attend a faith-based school. In a world of progressively declining moral standards, I believe the values and teachings of faith-based organizations - regardless of denomination - are more important than any time in</p>	17/01/204

No.	Name	Submission	Received
		<p>history. These institutions are one of the last bastions of society that work to create a moral fabric and upholding of bible taught and Christ like characteristics within our community. It is of utmost importance that basic religious charity status is maintained and that the DGR support for non-government schools is maintained. This provision is largely the reason faith-based schools have quality facilities and infrastructure - a necessity so they can compete with state-based schools and attract student numbers - which in itself relieves the state of the burden of educating all our children in an already overloaded and overtaxed schooling system. PLEASE DO NOT CHANGE THE BASIC RELIGIOUS CHARITY STATUS OF FAITH BASED SCHOOLS OR MAKE CHANGES TO THE DGR FOR THE SAME.</p>	
278-821	Jerry Doven	<p>Thanks for the opportunity to provide a submission to the draft 'Future foundations for giving' draft report.</p> <p>Having read through the report I am impressed with the goals of the inquiry however some of the recommendations appear to be misaligned if not contradictory to the government's intentions.</p> <p>As a parent and a business person, these points are of particular concern:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Removal of DGR status from the purposes of advancing religion, aged care, non-government schooling and childcare (page 179, first Key point of report) 2. Removal from the Charities Act of the concept of 'basic religious charity' and associated exemptions (Draft recommendation 7.1 of report) <p>As a concerned parent and business person, my concerns are multiple:</p> <p>Concerns as a parent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As having attended both government and non-government schools myself, I intend to send my children to an independent school which has DGR status. The higher standard of education I have proved in a private school environment is by any measure a "net public benefit" – firstly to my children then to the entire economy as they start work. • The removal of religion in both the above points I feel results in effectively a direct attack on religion, particularly as most private schools are faith-based. The discriminatory impacts of this will be wide-reaching. • Literacy levels in Australia are appalling enough without restricting access to private schools. The net effect of the above changes must be a significant increase in private school fees due 	18/01/2024

No.	Name	Submission	Received
		<p>to a reduction in giving, which is the stated intent of these changes – a very poorly timed suggestion when the government is seeking ways to lower cost of living.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should these changes proceed, and I am potentially forced to send my child to a public school, as having worked around State Government Education Departments for nearly 20 years I am convinced this would virtually collapse an already stretched system. The impact on my child’s education that this would have is a huge concern to me. <p>Concerns as a business person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giving to charitable purposes by businesses and individuals will be stifled by these changes rather than encouraged to give more. For example, just looking at only one category that will be affected by this report (refer Figure 5.1) School or college building funds are the 2nd largest category by number of DGR endorsed entities. How does removing this category align with the Terms of Reference’s stated aims of doubling philanthropic giving by 2030 (page 4 of draft report, Background)? Skills of employees – this is a huge concern with many young people lacking basic skills as they leave school. Private school educated employees are providing great productivity in our workplace, therefore reducing the availability of a private school education to future generations is a startling, and I believe un-intended outcome of these recommendations. Have the state governments been given opportunity to conduct financial modelling on the impact of the likely influx of students from private schools into the public schools (should these changes proceed)? <p>I respectfully request that my concerns be considered seriously, as these changes are surely going to affect many other families and businesses.</p>	
278-822	Stephen Pilbeam	<p>I am writing with concerns regarding the recommendations for deductible gift recipient (DGR) status to be scrapped for non-government schooling and other religious organisations, as stated in the draft recommendations.</p> <p>As a parent with my children attending an independent school that benefits from DGR status, my concern is that school fees will increase substantially if this was to be implemented due to the reduction in individual and business donors, as the removal of tax benefits would impact them greatly.</p>	18/01/2024

No.	Name	Submission	Received
		<p>At a time when we are experiencing huge cost of living pressure due to the current government disastrous immigration policies and overall ineptitude and incompetence, this would just be another nail in the coffin of the majority of Australian's trying to make ends meet.</p> <p>Please carefully consider the impact of this proposal as the education of our next generation must be one of the most important components we get right. I'm sure I speak for a lot of concerned parents.</p>	
278-823	Carl & Lisa Sandeman	<p>We have recently reviewed the draft report along with other submissions to get perspective as to the desired outcome of this inquiry. We are writing to you as parents to express our concerns about the potential consequences of adopting the Productivity Commission's recommendations, particularly in relation to the proposed changes to eliminate DGR status for private and independent schools.</p> <p>As parents of 2 children; 8 & 10 years old, one of our initial concerns is the anticipated increase in school fees that may result from the government's adoption of these recommendations. It is our understanding that schools may need to increase their income from fees due to reduced contributions from businesses and individuals. As parents this prospect is worrying, as it places an additional financial burden on our family and we are sure many other families who are already grappling with the substantial rising cost of living we are experiencing.</p> <p>Furthermore, in regards to school building funds, we worry about the effects on our school's ability to carry out essential building extensions and upgrades. These projects not only contribute to the improvement of educational facilities and moral amongst the school culture, but also support numerous small family building and trade based businesses in our local community who are well known to us. Restricting such developments could have a negative effect, impacting both the local community businesses and the quality of the environment in which our children receive their education.</p> <p>The potential decline in the educational experience of our children is a distressing consequence of these proposed changes. Diminishing resources may lead to an inadequate learning environment, hindering the academic potential of the oncoming generation. As parents, we are deeply invested in ensuring that our children receive the best education possible, and any compromise in this regard is a cause for concern.</p>	18/01/2024

No.	Name	Submission	Received
		<p>Additionally, as believers in faith, we would like to express our concern that these changes will be perceived as an attack on religious and faith-based organisations. To consider independent schools to be regarded as not having a net community-wide benefit is a biased and disconnected view. Preserving the independence of these institutions is crucial for those of us who value the unique educational perspectives and the teaching of moral values according to our beliefs that independent schools offer.</p> <p>If the proposed changes were to force families like ours to transition our children into local public schools, it could worsen existing issues of space limitations especially in regional areas in which we are located. We understand this situation as our children have been past students of public schools that faced these challenges.</p> <p>We reach out and personally urge you to consider the far-reaching consequences of these recommendations in regard to taking away DGR status from educational organisations and the impact this will have on families, small businesses, and the overall quality of education in our community as well as our freedom on our education choices. We appreciate your attention to these concerns and hope that all perspectives will be carefully evaluated and the potential impacts on education and our local economy will be considered before making any decisions.</p>	
278-824	Ross Hendy	<p>I am writing to express my concerns to some of elements of the above draft report.</p> <p>The underlying premise held by the APC, which advises that Religion offers NO community wide benefit, is utterly false.</p> <p>I note that with the opening of parliament this year 2024 all or many of the nation's politicians were very prominent to appear at the parliamentary church service and now your committee wants to disregard what the church provides to the nation by removing its DSG status. If all the churches building funds (DSG supported) cannot continue to build where will the politicians be able to go to appear to be supporting all the churches.</p> <p>All churches provide an invaluable service to the community by massively providing wellbeing and comfort to its participants and the community which is something that cannot provided by any government at any cost but are self sufficient thanks to the likes of DSG support and its participants. The withdrawal of DSG support will have an impact on government as if it wants community</p>	9/02/2024

No.	Name	Submission	Received
		<p>wellbeing it will have to provide other means (expenditure) to achieve any thing like the same outcomes provided by the churches.</p> <p>Further, church schools also provide massive community benefits and reduce government funding of schools and they educate students how the parents want their children to be taught, unlike the curricular being taught in most state schools, as is shown by the good results attained by church based schools in the NAPLAN testing in comparison to that of the state schools. By removing DSG from 'Church' schools the government is shooting its self in the foot, if these schools cannot proceed into the future i.e. provide new buildings and further improve the school facilities then the government will have to pick up the shortfall i.e. more students in state schools and more expenditure.</p> <p>Removing DSG from church based organisations will have a deleterious impact on their operational viability, causing many to close, which will add further burden to the budget and flow onto the Australian taxpayer.</p> <p>I note one of the reports recommendations is that the government establish an Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Philanthropic foundation, these peoples represent approx. ONLY 3% of our population and currently receive incredible amount Government financial support, it seems to me this Foundation is totally unwarranted and is against what the recent referendum decided i.e. that this is just another extension of what was to be THE VOICE.</p> <p>Further, I note another group being considered for DSG status is the LGTQI, another minority group whom can hardly claim to be doing good for a majority of the Australian population when compared to what the religious organisations achieve, yet you recommend removal of religious organisations DSG status.</p> <p>Therefore the best outcome for the government at this time would in my opinion be to not change the current DSG status in relation to religious organisations.</p>	
278-825	Andrew Scott	<p>I am alarmed with what I have heard and read about the proposed removal of DGR status for private school building funds. My own children went to private high schools at our own expense so that they could get a better education than at the overcrowded public schools in Tamworth, NSW. Now our grand children are just starting primary schooling (public school) and I still regularly donate to the school building fund where my children used to go to.</p>	9/02/2024

No.	Name	Submission	Received
		<p>If the government (both Federal and State) aren't spending enough taxpayers money on building more schools in growing regional towns then surely the private sector has to fill the lack. It would be much less burden on the Federal Government for the DGR status of school building funds to be maintained rather than more public schools to be built.</p> <p>The suggestion of providing more support to activists is reprehensible. Does the Labor Government want to fund terrorists too!</p> <p>Proper education for the young citizens of our beautiful country is far more important for the future well being of us all in Australia.</p>	
278-826	Bob Doven	<p>I write respectfully but I am deeply concerned by the recommendations contained in the Productivity Commission draft report on philanthropy released in December.</p> <p>These recommendations are an attack on democracy and the Christian values that this great country is based on and has prospered due to.</p> <p>They are deeply divisive and basically heading down a communist, socialist path that would foster the breakup of traditional family values and freedom of choice.</p> <p>To consider taking away the charitable status of a school building fund and providing it to LGBT or animal activist groups is absolutely shocking and I find it difficult to believe this has even got into the public arena, let alone become a recommendation.</p> <p>Left wing groups in this country are intent on destroying traditional family values which are the backbone of our society.</p> <p>Some of the animal charities in Australia are infiltrated by activists who would like to destroy our farming communities. To consider giving these people tax breaks as opposed to school building funds or faith based institutions is beyond belief.</p> <p>Do we want to give tax breaks to so-called human rights organisations who would like to open our borders up to anybody and release dangerous criminals from detention?</p> <p>My grandchildren attend a Christian school but people of all faiths and religions in this county are deeply concerned by these recommendations.</p>	9/02/2024

No.	Name	Submission	Received
		<p>In essence it is really an assault on all religions as most private and independent schools in this country are run by religious organisations.</p> <p>For the good of our families and our country, I would respectfully urge the federal government to totally reject the recommendations contained in this report.</p>	
278-827	Terence Davis	<p>And the governments continued promotion of charitable giving regardless of motive of the benefactor, is the only logical approach.</p> <p>But to claim that the arrangements that determine which entities can access DGR status are poorly designed, overly complex and have no coherent policy rationale, is unfounded.</p> <p>In fact, the government's whole approach to this subject is distressing.</p> <p>I have no legal status or experience. Yet I have no challenges interpreting Division 2, Sections 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 of the Charities Act 2013.</p> <p>The Government's idea that an independent philanthropic foundation should be established for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is a completely divisive concept. These same communities are accommodated by the same Act (Charities Act 2013) and, for their own long term international benefit, should promote and engage in charitable activity, to enhance their international standing.</p> <p>The suggestion that the Australian Government should establish a National Charity Regulators Forum with state and territory regulators to create a more formalized regulatory architecture only adds unnecessary additional government costs. In fact, if the government are serious about their promotion of philanthropy, they should consider abolishing the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and handing the decision-making back to the Australian Tax Office (ATO).</p> <p>As a parent and a grand-parent, I want the best for the next generations. But this is threatened by over-governance and ideological subversion.</p> <p>I implore you to consider my few short points. I'm certain that I wouldn't be alone with these concerns.</p>	9/02/2024

No.	Name	Submission	Received
278-828	Chester John Cox	<p>have noticed with concern the recommendation contained in the above draft report in relation to Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status being withdrawn for non-government primary, secondary, childcare, aged care, and other religious organisations.</p> <p>I have no doubt that if this recommendation were to be adopted it would adversely affect the quality of my children's education, and would like to tell you of my first-hand experience.</p> <p>I have lived all my life in regional Victoria, attending a state primary school and completing Grade 6 in 1995. My parents, as would any good parents, wanted the best education they could for me and had considerable concern in relation to secondary schooling. The main public secondary school locally had a terrible reputation with poor culture, lack of quality teachers, poor discipline, substance abuse amongst students and other areas of concern. Options were limited – there was one other Catholic-based secondary school locally, and the only other option was to travel. Ultimately, my parents and I chose to do my secondary schooling via correspondence through the Distance Education Centre Victoria (DECV), and I completed Years 7-12 in this way, including completing my VCE qualification in 2001.</p> <p>23 years later I now am a parent myself, with children aged 12, 10 and 6. Since 1995 progress has been made, and we now have more options for schooling than my parents had. My wife and I have made the choice to send our children to a local private school since 2020, and I am amazed at the difference in the quality of education that my children are getting, to what I received. In discussing schoolwork with my children, I have realised that they are being introduced to concepts in Grades 5 & 6 that I was never taught in my entire education. The school community is tight-knit; class sizes are small, we know the teachers and other staff on a first-name basis, and high percentage of the parents of the students are involved in some way or other in volunteer work. Our children are getting the opportunity to get a far better education than I ever had access to, and are being instilled with solid community values at the same time. All this does come at a cost, but it is worthwhile.</p> <p>However, I do fear that if the above recommendation is adopted, it will devastate our school community, increasing school fees further at a time when cost of living pressures are well publicised and pressure is being put on governments to reign it in. School capital works are also often funded by donations, and removing the DGR status will put up a large barrier to any giving, not remove one (which is, may I point out, expressly stated on Page iv under the heading Scope of the inquiry/research study, and I quote: 'address barriers to giving and harness opportunities to grow it</p>	9/02/204

No.	Name	Submission	Received
		<p>further'). The above recommendation is so contrary to the stated aims of the inquiry it is dumbfounding. It cuts right to the core of basic community & societal values and while it might appear a quick fix for a budget that needs repair, the long-term costs (from the perspective of both monetary and educational outcomes) would far outweigh any savings.</p> <p>Not much has changed with the local public secondary school since 1995 unfortunately, and I'm not prepared to send my children there, increasing class sizes further & putting more strain on the facilities and teaching staff, when I know there are far better options.</p> <p>I ask that the Commission would please consider my concerns, they are real, genuine and founded on fact; and not adopt this ignorant, short-sighted recommendation.</p>	
278-829	Bernard Lowenstein	<p>I have been made aware that the Australian Government Productivity Commission has undertaken a review of the DGR status recommending that charities that provide religious education be excluded.</p> <p>As a long term, conscientious donator and supporter of Religious Institutions and the cumulative good these institutions provide for our society, I am appalled to be made aware of such a potential stance from our government.</p> <p>There are too many virtues to list, but one does not need to look too far to asses the benefits of a religiously inclined society. Education, Voluntary Crisis Support and Religious Counselling, Moral Standards and not to mention Drug Reform, being items of erosion to our current society. I urge the powers that be, seriously consider the potential good of Religious Institutions and the benefits from those who are willing to offer financial support with their tax exempt donations.</p>	9/02/2024
278-830	The Hutchins School	<p>RECOMMENDATION: Withdrawal of Deducible Gift Recipient (DGR) status to building funds in primary and secondary schools.</p> <p>We are writing to you in our capacity as Chair and Principal of The Hutchins School to express serious concerns and bring to your attention the potential consequences associated with the withdrawal of DGR status from school building funds. We respectfully urge the Productivity Commission to reconsider its recommendation to remove DGR status for school building funds.</p> <p>About us</p> <p>The Hutchins School is an Anglican day and boarding school for boys from Pre-Kindergarten to Year 12, located in Hobart, Tasmania. Established in 1846, it is one of the oldest continually running</p>	9/02/204

No.	Name	Submission	Received
		<p>schools in Australia and has an enrolment of 1100 students. Our vision is to provide an inspirational education where each student strives to achieve their personal best and is willing to service their community as an informed and active citizen. Our mission is to provide a supportive learning community that works together to nurture character of boys. As a community, we aspire to be people of integrity who act with humility, kindness, courage, and respect.</p> <p>Make Your Mark capital campaign</p> <p>In 2018 the School Board determined the Signature Building (now named the NJ Edwards Hub) was the priority project in the Master Building Plan and the Advancement Office was directed to undertake the school's first major capital campaign (the Make Your Mark (MYM) campaign) in 30 years to assist with turning this project into a reality. The central feature of the N J Edwards Hub will be an auditorium capable of congregating the entire school, complemented by indoor sporting facilities and flexible learning/community spaces.</p> <p>Stage 1 of the works commenced in December 2023 with a construction budget of \$30,000,000. The MYM philanthropic target for Stage 1 of the development was \$15,000,000 and to date we have raised \$15,456,075 with 5,782 donations received. Stages 2 and 3 will follow in future years and will require significant philanthropic support. We are blessed to have a broad cohort of supporters who have contributed to the MYM campaign including past parents, past grandparents, alumni, staff, current parents, and current grandparents.</p> <p>Our local community has a shortage of recreational sporting facilities available for public use. We expect that the N J Edwards Hub will be regularly accessed by individuals and community-based organisations. The School has a deep, ongoing commitment to being an active participant in our community and making our facilities available for the public benefit.</p> <p>Philanthropy at Hutchins</p> <p>Hutchins aims to advance and grow a culture of giving. The School has benefited from the support of our community who have generously contributed to our Building Fund under the current DGR status, most of whom are not current parents. These funds have played a critical role in the development and maintenance of our school infrastructure, creating an environment for current and future students to have the opportunity to be nurtured, challenged, and inspired to be the best versions of themselves.</p>	

No.	Name	Submission	Received
		<p>If the DGR status were to be withdrawn, we anticipate a significant decline in philanthropy at the School. This potential reduction in financial support to the building fund, would undoubtedly influence our school's capacity to undertake necessary capital projects, renovations, and maintenance works. The absence of adequate funding for these essential aspects of school development will likely result in a decline in the overall quality of our facilities and a softening in enrolment numbers. Of course, any reduction in numbers in the independent school sector impacts the resources and demands of nearby government schools, many of which are at or over capacity.</p> <p>Furthermore, the impact on learning cannot be understated. A decline in the quality of infrastructure can adversely affect the learning experience of our students. Outdated or inadequately maintained facilities may hinder our ability to provide a safe and stimulating environment, adversely affecting the educational progress and evolving needs of our students.</p> <p>Our Advancement Office is governed by the Foundation Committee, a sub-committee of the Board and supported by a comprehensive suite of Policies and Procedures, including a Gift Acceptance Policy. Our philanthropy team are professionals and active members in industry bodies such as EducatePlus, Council for Advancement and Support of Education and the Fundraising Institute of Australia. As a school community we aspire to be people of integrity and to suggest, as the Commission has done in your Draft Report- Future foundations for giving 30/11/2023, a connection between a donor converting a tax-deductible donation into a private benefit, particularly if the donor is also paying school fees, is simply not correct. It represents a fundamental misunderstanding of who our donors are.</p> <p>Finally, we cannot understand how this proposed reform will support the Federal Government's aim to double philanthropic giving in Australia by 2030. Indeed, this proposal will likely have the opposite result.</p> <p>We respectfully request that the Commission carefully considers the potential consequences of withdrawing DGR status from school building funds. We are available to discuss this matter further and provide any additional information that may be helpful in your deliberations.</p> <p>We thank the Commission for the opportunity to provide this feedback.</p>	
278-831	Alister Kennard	I hope this message finds you well. I am writing as a concerned parent in response to the draft report on "Future Foundations for Giving" with a specific focus on the proposed withdrawal of DGR	9/02/2024

No.	Name	Submission	Received
		<p>(Deductible Gift Recipient) status for private schools, aged care facilities, childcare centers, and other religious establishments.</p> <p>My two children are currently enrolled in an independent school that benefits from DGR status, and I am deeply troubled by the potential repercussions of implementing the recommendations outlined in the report. I fear that such actions could adversely affect not only my children's education but also impact the educational opportunities for future generations in private schools.</p> <p>Should the government proceed with these recommendations, there is a significant concern about the reduced tax benefits available to private schools. This could result in a decline in the quality of learning facilities, ultimately leading to an academic excellence shortfall. The implications of this decision extend beyond the current generation, affecting the educational landscape for years to come.</p> <p>Moreover, if private schools are compelled to raise tuition fees to compensate for the loss of tax benefits associated with DGR status, it could force families like mine to reconsider their educational choices. In the midst of the current cost of living crisis, such a financial burden may lead us to enroll our children in an already crowded Meadowbank High School. This shift would not only impact their educational continuity but also disrupt the learning life skills they have acquired to date due to the change in the learning environment.</p> <p>In light of these concerns, I humbly request that my perspective and the potential consequences for families like mine are carefully considered in the decision-making process regarding the proposed changes to DGR status.</p>	
278-832	Name withheld	<p>I hope you're having a super-duper day! My name is Spencer, and I'm in fourth grade at this really cool independent school. I heard about something called the 'Future Foundations for Giving' report, and it made me feel a bit worried about my school.</p> <p>I really, really love my school! I just started my second year there, and it's super fun. But I heard they might take away something called DGR, and that sounds a bit tricky. My dad and mum explained that it could mean more money for school, and that's not so good.</p> <p>I don't want my school to change or become different. My friends are here, and my teachers are awesome. If they have to make fees higher, maybe some friends might have to leave, and that makes me sad. I want everyone to stay and have fun learning like we do now.</p>	9/02/2024

No.	Name	Submission	Received
		<p>Mrs. Karen, can you please help us? I don't want my school to be different. Maybe you can tell the grown-ups that we really like our school just the way it is.</p>	
278-833	Name withheld	<p>I hope you're doing well. I'm writing to you with a sense of urgency and worry regarding the 'Future Foundations for Giving' draft report from the Productivity Commission.</p> <p>I recently learned about the proposal to remove deductible gift recipient (DGR) status for independent schools like the one I attend. It's disheartening to think that this change might put my education in jeopardy.</p> <p>I understand there are important findings and recommendations in the report, but I'm genuinely concerned about the potential consequences for schools like mine. If the government decides to eliminate DGR status, the school might have to raise fees significantly. My parents are already feeling the pinch of the rising cost of living, and this change could make things even more difficult for them.</p> <p>I worry that, if the recommendation is adopted, families like mine might have to consider enrolling their children in crowded public schools. The thought of this not only scares me but also makes me anxious about the impact on my education and future opportunities.</p> <p>I implore you to consider the real impact this change could have on students like me. Please, let's work together to find a solution that ensures we can continue to receive a quality education without putting an additional burden on our families.</p> <p>Thank you for your understanding and immediate attention to this matter.</p>	9/02/2024
278-834	Name withheld	<p>I hope you're having a good day. My name is Wilhelmina, and I'm 10 years old. I heard about something called the 'Future Foundations for Giving' draft report, and it's making me really worried about my school.</p> <p>I go to this cool independent school, and I heard they might take away something called DGR. I don't really understand all the grown-up stuff, but it sounds like it could make things hard for my school. My mum says it might mean higher fees, and that's not good because everyone is already talking about money being tight.</p>	9/02/2024

No.	Name	Submission	Received
		<p>I love my school, and my friends are there. If they have to make fees higher, some kids might have to leave, and that's really sad. I don't want to go to a different school, and I don't want my friends to leave.</p> <p>Can you please help? I don't want things to change. I hope you can talk to the grown-ups and tell them we really need our school to stay awesome.</p>	
278-835	Name withheld	<p>I would like to share my concerns regarding the impact of some of the recommendations outlined in the draft report. I am the father of 4 children, two of whom currently attend an independent private school that benefits from DGR status. My youngest is in childcare, and my father is cared for in a private Aged Care centre after suffering a debilitating stroke. I am a regular churchgoer.</p> <p>I am very concerned at the suggestion that non-government primary and secondary schools, childcare, and aged care centres, and even religious organisations, could be stripped of their DGR status.</p> <p>With the pressure on finances that the current cost of living crisis is having on us all, I am certain that if this recommendation was to take effect, (as a result of the reduction in giving our school would receive) there is no way we could afford the increased school fees to put our children through an independent school, and give them the education that as parents, my wife and I have committed to give our children.</p> <p>We are stretched financially to afford school fees as they stand currently. If this was to be supported by government, we would have no choice but to move our children into the public system, which I know for certain is already overcrowded in the area we live. We feel very strongly about this, as we feel it would stunt our children's academic potential.</p> <p>The school our children attend is planning an expansion/renovation program to improve the facilities, which we are in full support of, and our family business has been able to contribute in a small way towards the funds needed. I do not believe the school would be able to afford this without the giving from family businesses whose children attend the school, which would be drastically reduced if school building funds are no longer tax deductible.</p> <p>I feel strongly that this is an attack on religion, and on faith-based schools - institutions that have been a fundamental part of our society, in favour for supporting "diverse" groups, such as</p>	9/02/2024

No.	Name	Submission	Received
		<p>environmentalists, activist groups and other “organisations”, at the severe, potentially crippling, detriment to institutions that provide quality education for our youth - the potential of our nation.</p> <p>I strongly request that my concerns are considered, and this this recommendation not be supported.</p>	
278-836	Name withheld	<p>I have had a look at this draft report which is an interesting proposal by the government, but if I may I would like to express my concerns and a few views regarding this proposal.</p> <p>My wife and I as parents of five children who have and still currently have (three) children attend private school have a concern that if this proposal is passed the private school that our three children attend and have put great effort into their learnings will have to close due to lack of DGR funds as well as other private schools. We as parents work very hard year in year out to pay the private school fees with which we struggle to do so that our children come out of school with a higher academic level than what I at least did as we were poor as children and attended public school which to be honest was a rough school. The use of drugs by senior students was common to the point the police got involved and it was not a good experience to say the least.</p> <p>My daughter who left year 12 last year earned herself the Long Tan Award which is an incredible achievement and I know she wouldn't have got that going through our local public school. She was stretched through thick and thin to succeed and look at the result.</p> <p>My son who left school two years ago is now an operations manager of a state branch for a national business, his desire is to start his own business one day so that he can get ahead like all hard working Australians, emphasis on the “Hard working”.</p> <p>There is an old expression and as far I'm concerned it is still true, “you pay peanuts, you get Monkeys”. We want top educated people to run our country, people who understand business, pressures, disasters, world peace, war, famines, and above all the proper care of its people. You won't get these talents in government, business, law, military by stopping the funding to private schools.</p> <p>Higher taxes is another concern to me, raising taxes and implementing new taxes is going to cull small to medium businesses. Its simple, Higher taxes, equals less businesses equals less revenue equals a broke government. Simpler, lower taxes equals more business, more revenue and a prosperous government. You have to find the happy medium, its like a car, drive it hard you will use more fuel and won't get as far, drive it less hard, save fuel and you will go further.</p>	9/02/2024

No.	Name	Submission	Received
		<p>Karen and team, please consider the above, we must arrest the possible disaster and lets make Australia the "Place to be".</p> <p>As you can see, my grammar is terrible.....I went through public school. 😊</p>	
278-837	Hugh and Kristine McCowen	<p>We are writing to express our grave concern over the consideration to remove DGR status from organisations which employ and support SRE in schools.</p> <p>SRE forms a cost efficient wellbeing alternative to thousands of students in our school systems. SRE provides curriculum to students which promotes love, purpose, kindness, grace, mercy, value, reconciliation, tolerance, resilience, self reflection and moral values.</p> <p>The SRE lessons are conducted by people from faith organisations who are not only vetted by the school where they work but also vetted by the faith organisation they belong to. This system doubles the accountability and professionalism of the people who are in the SRE workplace.</p> <p>The removal of the DGR status will certainly impact the ability of organisations to place appropriately trained and suitable people in our schools to give SRE instruction to students who have opted in to the SRE program.</p> <p>As much as 50% of funds donated could be withdrawn from the SRE program if the DGR Status is removed.</p> <p>We have consistently seen evidence that SRE guides and assists young people into leadership through serving the interests of others, being responsible, caring and valued community members by having an awareness and active concern for the wellbeing of those around them.</p> <p>Being the parents of 3 teenage children we implore you to not jeopardise the SRE program by removing the DGR status when it does so much good throughout our communities.</p>	9/02/2024
278-838	Name withheld	<p>We write to you regarding the Productivity Commission 'Future foundations for giving' draft report.</p> <p>We are passionate about philanthropic giving as it helps the cause of so many underprivileged persons and mostly promotes a stronger fabric within communities.</p> <p>So, we have been interested in the Productivity Commission and have been going through the 'Future foundations for giving' draft report.</p>	9/02/2024

No.	Name	Submission	Received
		<p>While we appreciate some of the recommendations, one that we are very concerned about is that the Deductible Gift Recipient status is to be removed from non-government schools.</p> <p>We have a special needs child who attends an independent school that currently benefits from Deductible Gift Recipient status. If the school loses this status, I feel they will be forced to increase school fees, putting further pressure on our already stretched household expenses, and/or they will just not be able to undertake necessary upgrade works.</p> <p>This will negatively impact the education of our own special needs child, and there are many, many other Australian children that will be similarly negatively affected.</p> <p>Please do consider our plea that non-government schools are not stripped of their DGR status.</p>	
278—839	Roger Wibberley	<p>In reading the draft report, 'Future Foundations For Giving' with interest and of great concern on particular issues that are raised in the report, I respectfully write to you for consideration and action of a 'no change' to the proposed DGR laws.</p> <p>As a parent of a young household and Christian background, I am concerned of the changes that are proposed to the DGR laws which will impact negatively on society. This will affect and reduce giving from businesses and individuals to schools which will increase school fees and in the current economic environment, add to the already high households' cost-of-living pressures. This will potentially force children into public schools which are already overcrowded.</p> <p>Another impact from the reduced giving to independent school building funds will be the lack to undertake building upgrades and infrastructure improvements which are necessary to provide a healthy, safe, and suitable learning environment to increase the child's ability to learn and foster academic potential.</p> <p>In respect to a child who has a learning difficulty, the child was moved from the public school to an independent school which has had great positive results, within a short timeframe, to the child's learning comprehension due to the intense one-on-one support given from the independent schools teaching regime.</p> <p>In summary, if these changes from the Productivity Commission are executed, this is directly attacking these independent faith-based schools/charitable organisations and not considering the negative wide bearing effect on our communities and families, which are the backbone of our nation.</p> <p>Please support and consider my concerns and requests in advocating for the dismissal of the proposed DGR changes.</p>	9/02/204

No.	Name	Submission	Received
278-840	Jason Donald	<p>I write to you with concern after reading the Productivity Commission's draft report as to the proposed changes that could significantly affect the funding model for faith-based schools.</p> <p>As a Christian, parent, active member of the local community, supporter of giving & philanthropy and small business owner the suggestion to scrap the deductible gift recipient status for non-government faith-based schools and organisations who rely on this support is disturbing to say the least.</p> <p>My four children, as well as my widowed sisters four children, have all benefitted from the high level of education and protective learning environment offered by private schooling. Without the funding support of those able to donate to private schooling due to the loss of tax benefits, we would not have been able to afford the school fees for their education.</p> <p>In addition, it is clear that the decreased support through DGR will directly impact schools ability to undertake building and infrastructure improvements needed to maintain the level of education provided.</p> <p>I urge you to please strongly consider the far-reaching implications in the draft report and that you will advocate for the dismissal of the recommendations of the report to scrap the DGR status.</p>	9/02/2024
278-841	Name withheld	<p>I am writing to express my concerns at the potential that the provision of deductible gift recipient (GDR) status may be removed for non-government schools, childcare, aged care, and other religious organisations.</p> <p>I am a manager of a medium business as well as running a farming operation to meet the needs of my wife and three children (which have increased greatly with recent cost of living increases). We work hard to be able to educate our children at an independent school as we are concerned with the influences at the government high schools which are contrary to the fundamental, Christian beliefs which we bring our children up in.</p> <p>Further we have chosen an independent school which promotes self-directed learning and provides special support my son who has ADHD. Should DGR be scrapped, this would inevitably result in an increase in school fees which would make it almost unsustainable for us to help our children fulfill their full potential as contributing citizens.</p> <p>I strongly encourage you to consider that philanthropic giving needs to be kept channelled to education rather than being directed in less beneficial causes, or greatly reduced in its effectiveness.</p>	9/02/2024
278-842	Name withheld	<p>It's with great interest that I read the draft report. While there are several things that I agree with, I am also very concerned about the recommendations for deductible gift recipient status (DGR) to be removed for non-government primary, secondary, childcare, aged care and other religious organizations.</p>	9/02/2024

No.	Name	Submission	Received
		<p>Throughout my childhood my mother and farther ran a small business and put in extraordinary hours to allow them to further the education of myself and my four siblings. Dad would leave the house at 5am each morning and head to work and get home at 6pm each night. These long hard hours however where not enough to send us to an elite private school. Rather they allowed us to go to a smaller private school that catered specifically to our individual needs. Dad and Mum were able to then contribute any money over and above our basic household expenses directly to the schools building fund to enable the school to improve its facilities and increase its capacity to take further enrollments.</p> <p>Thanks to Dad and Mum’s hard work and the DGR status of our small private school my siblings and I have been able to establish ourselves in several small businesses, which now employ approximately 84 staff from within our local communities. Included within these staff are people with terminal cancer, ex-military serviceman, reformed drug addicts, and staff that are reintegrating with society after time in prison.</p> <p>We have initiated a program within our business which enables our staff to nominate their own local community school, church, aged care system, mosque, synagogue, temple or any other religious organization. Its our way of paying it forward and giving everyone a fair go. Its the Australian way.</p> <p>I have a strong concern that if the government was to adopt this recommendation to remove DGR status it would tear apart the very fabric of our Australian society. The very fabric of a fair go. The very fabric that allowed my siblings and I to rise up from difficult circumstances. The very fabric that allows me to now reach down and lift other people up out of poverty.</p> <p>I would strongly urge you to ensure that this recommendation is rejected.</p>	
278-843	Name withheld	<p>I am writing as a concerned parent/ grandparent about the proposed changes to funding of private schools, namely the idea to defund private schools.</p> <p>I went thru the public system myself, but my Wife and I felt we wanted something better for our children. We sacrificed and went without to give our children a better education. But it was an uphill battle for us, and I don’t know how we would have done it without the government funding as our school fees would have been much higher without this. And now with the cost of living getting worse I just don’t know how my children will be able to do what we did for them for their children if the radical idea to defund private schools is adopted as School fees will certainly have to increase. My youngest child finished school last year, and I have 2 small grandsons who will be starting school in the coming years.</p> <p>I feel that there is public benefit for private education as my children did a lot better than both myself and my wife at school and they were a lot more work ready than my wife and I back in the day. My children spent the early years in the public system and but the bulk of their years in a private school.</p>	9/02/2024

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		<p>They were definitely happier and more motivated in the private school than the public system. My youngest scored a ATAR of 87.4% when I didn't even get an ATAR! My wife and I are convinced that the investment we made in our children that was made possible through government funding has already been justified. My eldest boy is a draftsman and working into design and my daughter went straight into an estimating role in a construction company and both have already given back to society. And my youngest boy's career is shaping up well.</p> <p>Also, I think the push to deny the private school's charitable status is a bad move as building work is very expensive and we are always under pressure to have good schooling environments for the children and teachers' sake, and they have to coax generous donations out donors and this will only make it harder. Also, a lot of local business benefit from the investments that our school makes, and this will be sorely missed if funding suddenly dries up.</p> <p>I am worried that this is an attack on religion as it doesn't make any sense to me to try and force more children into an already overcrowded school system and then have to pay more money building more schools with taxpayers' money and funding these schools that will surely cost a lot more than it saves and put more pressure on an already under pressure public system. I trust the Government has enough sense to realize that the push could be a sinister sneaky attack on religion rather than something that makes sense. The point is most of the private schools have a religious backing even though ours and a lot of others don't even teach religion in the school.</p> <p>Australia is a lucky country, and I don't see any point changing something that could easily make thousands of Australian kids unlucky. Please use don't defund our private schools as it's often the Aussie battlers that it helps not the rich and famous as the media seem portray, as I am just an average wage earner.</p>	
278-844	Name withheld	<p>We write to you regarding the Productivity Commission 'Future foundations for giving' draft report. We are passionate about philanthropic giving as it helps the cause of so many underprivileged persons and mostly promotes a stronger fabric within communities.</p> <p>So, we have been interested in the Productivity Commission and have been going through the 'Future foundations for giving' draft report.</p> <p>While we appreciate some of the recommendations, one that we are very concerned about is that the Deductible Gift Recipient status is to be removed from non-government schools.</p> <p>We have a special needs child who attends an independent school that currently benefits from Deductible Gift Recipient status. If the school loses this status, I feel they will be forced to increase school fees, putting further pressure on our already stretched household expenses, and/or they will just not be able to undertake necessary upgrade works.</p>	9/02/2024

No.	Name	Submission	Received
		<p>This will negatively impact the education of our own special needs child, and there are many, many other Australian children that will be similarly negatively affected.</p> <p>Please do consider our plea that non-government schools are not stripped of their DGR status.</p>	
278-845	Name withheld	<p>Upon reviewing the draft report I find of great concern the proposal to withdraw DGR status for non-government schools, and other like organisations.</p> <p>We have 3 children, of which one is Down Syndrome, who all attend the same independent school. This can only be of great benefit to both the children and our future as parents. Whilst the public education system in Australia enjoys significant public funding and positive outcomes from well grounded policy, the results from students traversing the private/independent schools cannot be argued.</p> <p>Furthermore, the adjusted support our Down Syndrome child currently receives from the independent school is beyond what would be deemed as economically equitable, as both the educators and us as parents strive to maximise his potential for the workforce.</p> <p>To withdraw DGR status from such organisations can only stifle the future of the nation. A country like Australia which has a relatively low manufacturing base, but enjoys higher wages and standards of living, relies on a highly educated workforce for export of goods and services. Our family, like many other Australian families, are currently experiencing significant increases in living costs beyond what we would have deemed possible 2 or 3 years ago. To withdraw DGR status from independent schools would clearly result in increased student fees, therefore likely meaning the withdrawal of our children from the independent school. This would be stagnating their career opportunities plus their social and mental health in the most important period of the lives.</p> <p>Please consider our concerns and the concerns of many like parent/s.</p>	9/02/2024
278-846	Name withheld	<p>I write to voice my reservations regarding the recommendation in the draft report to remove DGR status for certain organisations. Of specific concern is the proposal affecting non-government schools. This recommendation seems at variance to the terms of reference of the inquiry – "... to identify opportunities and obstacles to increasing such giving."</p>	9/02/204

No.	Name	Submission	Received
		<p>I have several grandchildren, one of whom is autistic, attending independent schools. The level of support and individual tuition he receives in an inclusive classroom environment would be difficult to find in mainstream government facilities which are often struggling with large class sizes.</p> <p>In addition, the cultural diversity provided by independent schools is an important part of Australia's social fabric, and this has been supported by successive governments for many years.</p> <p>Removing DGR status of these schools will add to the cost of their development and potentially transfer the cost of a percentage of students to the public system without proportionally increasing government revenue, as the gifts made are from discretionary spending which can be diverted elsewhere.</p> <p>I would appreciate your consideration of my concerns and would strongly advocate the retention of current arrangements regarding DGR status.</p>	