



COMMUNITY CHILD CARE

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30 September 2003

Consultation on the Definition of a Charity
The Board of Taxation
C/- The Treasury
Langton Crescent
Parkes
ACT 2600

Dear Madam/Sir

Re: Consultation on the Definition of a Charity

Thank you for the invitation to comment on the exposure draft of legislation (the Charities Bill 2003) defining a charity for the purposes of all Commonwealth legislation.

Community Child Care is the peak body for community owned, not-for-profit child care services in Victoria. We welcome the acknowledgment in the Bill that child care services are charitable.

However we are extremely concerned at Clause 8: Disqualifying Purposes which excludes from charitable status organisations which have among their purposes:

- 'changing the law or Government policy' or
- 'advocating a cause'

Community owned child care services, and many other charitable organisations grew out of the social change movements which had as their purpose advocating for vulnerable and disadvantaged people, facilitating self help and pressuring for changes to government policies which exacerbated the causes of disadvantage.

While providing much needed services, these charities work tirelessly to advocate and to influence government policy in the best interests of the people they serve.

We believe the draft Bill unfairly excludes from charitable status those organisations which are unwilling to simply put on a bandaid, but which work to prevent the wounds.

Therefore we urge the Board to adopt a definition of charity which recognises that advocacy on behalf of vulnerable and disadvantaged people is a charitable act in itself.

Yours truly,

Barbara Romeril
Executive Director