



**mental health
association
nsw inc**

30 September, 2003

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

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Dear Sir/Madam,

ABN 11 326 005 224

Consultation on the definition of a Charity

Vice-Regal Patron
Her Excellency
Professor
Marie Bashir AC
Governor of NSW

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed legislation. The Mental Health Association NSW Inc is a member of the Council of Social Service of NSW and we support its submission to Board of Taxation dated 30 September 2003.

In particular we are very concerned about the proposal that charities that have advocacy or "attempting to change the law or government policy" among their activities not fall within the definition of a charity. This organisation was formed in 1932 and has a long and proud history of advocating for the rights of people with a mental illness. Such systems advocacy is fundamental to the Mental Health Association NSW, as to many other community organisations, and we would oppose strongly any move to disqualify such organisations as charities on that basis.

Our concern is that any government of the day will use such power to threaten and silence genuine criticism in the community.

We urge the Board of Taxation to resist strenuously any move to pressure legitimate community organisations in this way.

Yours sincerely,

Gillian Church
Chief Executive Officer

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and Resource Centre
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