

5 Noel Court
Wantirna South
Victoria 3152
August 11th 2011

Manager
Philanthropy and Exemptions Unit
Personal and Retirement Income Division
The Treasury
Langton Crescent
PARKES ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam

I refer to the article "Exposure Draft - 'In Australia' Special Conditions for Tax Concession Entities" published by The Treasury on July 4th 2011 which stated:

- income tax exempt entities generally must be operated principally in Australia and for the broad benefit of the Australian community; and
- deductible gift recipients generally must be operated solely in Australia and for the broad benefit of the Australian community.

I find the proposed initiative totally "unAustralian" in its intent. Whilst charity starts at home, recently we have seen so many global catastrophes and devastating natural disasters, one hesitates to imagine how simply focusing on looking after "ourselves" alone will enable us to play a part in the global scenario. The approach suggests we will require no assistance from overseas should we be unfortunate enough to suffer a similar if not equally devastating event such as the Sichuan earth quake, the tsunami that hit Indonesia, and closer to home, the recent earth quake in New Zealand? As leader of many nations in the South Pacific region, how is it possible that we actually limit Australians by discouraging them support for the less developed nations around us?

I am personally involved in projects both in Australia as well as in under-developed countries. The current strength of the Australian dollar has also enhanced the ability to assist in building many infrastructure projects from schools, orphanages to hospitals, just to name a few.

Many Australians had spent much of their lives dedicating themselves to help the poor, the marginalised and the disadvantaged. Fred Hollows, the ophthalmologist who helped set up the first Aboriginal Medical Service and launched a national programme to combat eye disease in Aboriginal Australians also extended his campaign for treating avoidable eye disease in some of the world's poorest countries. In 2008, The Cambodian Government awarded The Fred Hollows Foundation with a rare medal of honour, acknowledging the organisation's contribution to preventing unnecessary blindness in the country. As an example, this proposed initiative will effectively render donations to the Fred Hollows Foundation non-tax deductible, perhaps undoing the momentum of all the good work the Foundation has done so far.

I am also disappointed that so little time is given to debate and allow appropriate stake holders to engage in meaningful dialogue prior to a decision. I, for one, only got to know about the article after speaking with other folks engaged in similar projects. I would certainly urge the department, in advising the government on the matter, to broaden our outlook, recognising Australia remain key to the leadership and support of the region. By all means eradicate tax frauds, inappropriate practices and illegal dealings via tax deductibility vehicles. But do not abandon our responsibility and moral obligation to encourage wider Australia to be charitable both inside and outside of our nation.

Yours sincerely



Mark Lo
Chairman, One Mission Society