



Our Ref: BF:cmb (1911246)
Contact: Ben Felten
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24 April 2009

AFTS Secretariat
The Treasury
Langton Crescent
PARKES ACT 2600

By email to: Review Secretariat
AFTSubmissions@treasury.gov.au

Dear Secretariat

Submission for the Review of the Australian Taxation System

I refer to the above matter to support consideration of Mr. John Farragher's submission for the introduction of a tax incentive for the provision of access to premises to be considered under the terms of the Review of the Australian Taxation System.

At the Penrith City Council Access Committee meeting on Wednesday 4 February 2009 Mr Farragher identified access to commercial premises in the Penrith CBD as a major issue for people with reduced mobility, wheelchair users and others including people with prams, walking frames or using electric scooters.

Mr Farragher had discussed the issue with David Bradbury MP seeking the Commonwealth Government's support to investigate the possibility of making available a tax concession to encourage the retrofitting of commercial premises with enhanced access. In many cases this retrofitting may well only involve minor works. Mr Farragher had received a letter from David Bradbury MP indicating that he had written to the Hon Chris Bowen MP, Assistant Treasurer, and Minister for Competition Policy and Consumer Affairs, and also to the Hon Bill Shorten MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services, in relation to the matter.

On 23 February Mr Farragher forwarded a submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs. The submission has been presented to the Inquiry into the draft Disability (Access to Premises - Buildings) Standards.

At the Penrith City Council Access Committee meeting of 1 April 2009 it was recommended that a letter be forwarded to the review of the Australian Taxation System supporting consideration of Mr Farragher's submission.

Mr Farragher has given his consent to allow the attached submission to be published on the AFTS website.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me on (02) 4732 7839 or Ben Felten, Council's Disability Access Officer, on (02) 4732 8081.

Yours faithfully

Jeni Pollard
Acting Community and Cultural Development Manager

23 February 2009

Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee
on Legal and Constitutional Affairs
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By email to: laca.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Secretary

Submission on the DRAFT Disability Access to Premises Building Standards

I refer to the above matter and write to request that consideration be given to the introduction of a tax concession relating to the direct building and associated costs for the provision of access where the building works are undertaken without same being required by statute, regulation, local government requirement, construction approval or similar requirement.

This would help provide an incentive for the provision of access not only for disabled people and their carers, and also for people with prams for young infants, people with walking frames and people with electric scooters.

As the population ages access will become a greater issue for many in our communities.

The tax concession could be a 100% (or other %) or an accelerated depreciation allowance over 2 or 3 years.

I attach a copy of a letter to me from David Bradbury MP Federal Member for Lindsay dated 4 February 2009.

Would you kindly follow up with the Assistant Treasurer's and the Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services' staff in relation to the matter.

In my view such a scheme is worthy of detailed consideration and would encourage commercial premises owners and/or tenants to consider the opportunities for providing or improving access to their premises. Increased numbers of customers/clients should increase sales and service.

Whilst my submission does not go to the DRAFT directly, I ask the Standing Committee to seek appropriate assistance and expertise from the government so that my proposal can be subject of discussion and hopefully implementation, even if by another government department.

I have been confined to a wheelchair for 31 years and am confronted with these problems on a daily basis. In my employment with Panthers for 27 years I continuously come into contact with large numbers of people from a broad section of the local community including parents with prams, the elderly with walking frames and/or electric scooters, the disabled and persons who are suffering injuries. This proposal will be of significant benefit to all.

One small example of the practical application of my proposal would be the removal of a step into a shop and its replacement with an appropriate grade ramp.

Please feel free to contact me by phone about this matter.

Yours sincerely

John W Farragher

[removed for privacy reasons]

This email was typed for and on behalf of John Farragher, and on his direction, by Stephen Bowers [removed for privacy reasons]