



## AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

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### Government should reject Productivity Commission findings

Productivity Commission recommendations to exclude organisations with a religious purpose from deductible gift recipient (DGR) status and to abolish Basic Religious Charities (BRCs) should be rejected by the Albanese Government.

The Government yesterday released the Productivity Commission report *Future Foundations for Giving*.

President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB, expressed his disappointment with the report.

“The commission was charged with increasing philanthropy in Australia but incredibly thinks that can be achieved by excluding people of faith, who are known to give generously of their time and money,” he said.

Archbishop Costelloe said the commission did not appear to have sought constitutional legal advice despite submissions detailing the problems with abolishing Basic Religious Charities.

“The Productivity Commission has recommended abolishing Basic Religious Charities without addressing the significant constitutional difficulties (Constitution Section 116) which many have identified,” he said.

“For example, abolishing Basic Religious Charities would mean the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission could replace and appoint responsible persons in religious entities or direct religious bodies to alter governance rules and structures.

“In practice this means they could remove a priest from management of a parish and appoint someone else, interfering in the operation of a religious organisation.”

Archbishop Costelloe was also critical of the commission’s recommendations regarding religious schools, which would create a school building and capital works funding gap.

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference’s submission to the inquiry can be found [here](#).