



Reason Australia Incorporated

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Laura Chipp finds novel tax SOLUTION to pay for Northcote essential services

In advance of her official campaign launch on Tuesday, Laura Chipp the Reason-endorsed candidate for the Northcote by-election has today come out strongly in favour of removing the tax-exempt charitable status of religious owned businesses.

“In Victoria, giant businesses avoid paying payroll and land taxes. They enjoy exemptions from stamp duty and don’t pay any rates to council, simply by claiming charitable status,” Chipp said. “This has gone on for too long. By removing the tax-free status of religious run businesses we would be able to pay for affordable aged care, better child care options for parents and much needed funding for state schools.”

REASON’s founder, Fiona Patten MLC has long campaigned for the removal of “advancement of religion” as a basis for charitable status.

“Let’s be clear here. We are not talking about the charitable works of Churches. We are talking about money-making machines such as Sanitarium, the breakfast cereal manufacturer, and Hillsong”, Patten said. “The recent census shows that Australians are less religious than ever and yet we still subsidise Churches to the tune of billions of dollars.”

REASON argues that not only do these businesses enjoy exemptions from Federal, State and local government taxes but they use their funds to campaign against issues that the majority of Australians support, such as voluntary assisted dying and same-sex marriage.

Chipp points to what she calls the aged care crisis in Victoria and points out that Church owned businesses are increasingly investing in very profitable high end aged care facilities.

“We need a serious review into investment in the aged care sector”, Chipp says. “In Northcote we need investment in aged care facilities that focus on keeping people close to their communities rather than just making profits.”

“Revenues raised from making religious-run businesses pay their fair share of tax could also provide millions of dollars for the schools of Northcote as well as providing for affordable child care.”

“This could all be done without any further tax burden on Victorian residents” Chipp said. “We simply have to do away with the medieval notion that religious-owned businesses should not pay tax. These exemptions do not exist overseas in places like Toronto and reform is long overdue here.”

Ms Chipp states that she “applauds many religious organisations for offering crucial social and support services to communities. The issue here is giant businesses not paying tax.”

Laura Chipp’s campaign launch: 7:00pm. Francesca’s Bar 222 High St, Northcote VIC 3070

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