



Speech by

Mr P. PURCELL

MEMBER FOR BULIMBA

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JUNIOR SPORT; GST

Mr PURCELL (Bulimba—ALP) (7.10 p.m.): When Howard and Costello were doing their big sell on the GST, I like the rest of Australia thought I was aware of the majority of items which would be taxable under the GST. Little did I know that one of the many areas that the Prime Minister and the Treasurer were targeting in their sights was to raise extra revenue by a goods and services tax on donations to junior sport.

On the one hand, we have dedicated people voluntarily giving up their free time, working hard to raise funds for junior sport, and on the other hand we have Howard and Costello cheerfully helping themselves to 10 per cent of every dollar donated to junior sport. I would be interested if honourable members opposite could explain and justify how a goods and services tax, which they supported when it was brought in by Howard and Costello, applies on a donation to a junior sporting club.

This Prime Minister and his Treasurer have surpassed themselves in the eyes of the Australian public. While it is becoming more and more difficult for the average Australian worker or pensioner to put food on their table, a roof over their head and clothes on their back, all because of the GST, the terrible twosome are also hitting on children's sports.

A GST levy on a donation to junior sports clubs results in only one winner—the federal Treasury. The majority of people who make donations to junior sporting clubs are parents—just your average pay-as-you-earn employees, the mums and dads of the players. Howard and Costello could not possibly live in the real world. Don't they realise how hard it is for junior clubs to survive, how many hours per week dedicated volunteers put in, and how hard it is to raise funds for clubs to keep them going?

Mr Howard makes a lot of noise about being a sports fan. Where does he think Australia's Olympians, cricketers, footballers and other sporting heroes come from? All got their start in junior sport. Not every child continues on with their sport. But the benefits to their health give them a great start, and the discipline and learning to play as a team member will stand them in good stead for the rest of their lives.

The two things that keep junior sport going are volunteers and donations. Without these two things junior sport would not exist in this country. Well done, Mr Howard! What is next? A GST on children's laughter? If he has his way, the only sport our children will be left with is chasing a jam tin with a stick. On behalf of Australian children, I say: thanks, Mr Howard!
