



Belconnen Cats
Junior Australian Football Club
PO Box 439 Belconnen ACT 2616
www.belconnencatsafl.com.au

12/05/2015

The Secretary
Standing Committee on Public Accounts
Legislative Assembly for the Act
GPO Box 1020
CANBERRA ACT 2601

 A.C.T. LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE OFFICE	
SUBMISSION NUMBER	83
DATE AUTH'D FOR PUBLICATION	9 June 2015

Dear Mr Smyth,

RE: Inquiry into elements impacting on the future of the ACT Clubs Sector

On behalf of the Belconnen Cats Junior Australian Football Club I wish to comment on the above Inquiry.

The Canberra Labor Club Group has supported our organisation for 8 years. During this time the Canberra Labor Club has provided our club with both financial support as well as the use of their facilities to host sign-on days, committee meetings and end-of season functions.

Support from the Canberra Labor Club has enabled us to renew our equipment and to purchase new player uniforms which have added to the identity, the pride and the excitement of our players and families. We are now mid-way through an equipment renewal period that sees the Cats retaining a safe sporting environment whilst also providing the equipment that will help develop our players. After recently having to move out of a Canberra government facility, we required coaches and managers to store club equipment at their residence. Through Canberra Labor Club financial support we have recently been able to procure a much needed storage container that will store our training equipment and remove the burden from our already hard working volunteers. Finally, the new jerseys have given the club a sense of identity, with the newly designed Cat's claws the Belconnen Cats have a real sense of pride and identity in who they are.



Belconnen Cats new uniform - providing a sense of identify and pride in their Club





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Junior football is heavily reliant on volunteers. For the Cats to provide quality support to our teams we look to attract and skill our volunteers to maximise the service we provide. The support from the Canberra Labor Club allows us to fund training and education programs that give our volunteers the knowledge and confidence to support their team's weekend game.

The Cats do not have a club house or similar facility. As such, the facilities provided by the Canberra Labor Club gives the Cats a home as well as providing an environment which is friendly and professional. These facilities allow us to hold committee meetings, education/training courses and end-of-season functions. All these events add to our organisation's appeal and the level of service that it provides to the community. The staff at the Labor Club are always very professional and helpful to our football club.

The combination of the financial support and the use of Canberra Labor Club's facilities have supported the Cats in developing a strong identity and the ability to reach out and attract members of the community to try sport, challenge themselves and develop football and life skills through our Club. Our organisation also promotes a sense of community awareness and support. Last weekend (as with previous years) saw the Belconnen Cats promote Pink Week and support for the Breast Cancer Network Australia. Our players wore pink arm bands, sprayed their hair pink and collected donations for BCNA. This strong sense of community is only possible due to financial support of the Canberra Labor Club that helps us procure the necessary equipment and set the sense of community that attracts our volunteers.



Belconnen Cats players supporting Pink Week

The Belconnen Cats project a sense of community, positivity and inclusiveness. This attracts families from all economic and social backgrounds who come together to encourage their children to develop life skills, to enjoy sport, develop confidence and foster mateship. Without the assistance of the Canberra Labor Club, our organisation would have been struggling to ensure the fundamentals of a safe environment with the bare minimum to support putting a team of the field. Skill and social development activities would have been at a minimum or non-existent. This would have resulted in a fragile organisation, with no 'home' facilities and reliant upon our volunteers to do more and more for the club. The pressure on our volunteers could have easily resulted in it being impossible to attract further support as existing members left the club. The burden on our volunteer base may well have seen the club disintegrate due to a lack of funds, facilities and volunteers.



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We cannot envisage any other organisation or government agency being able to fill the void if the Canberra Labor Club was not there to support us.

The assistance of the Club Industry in the ACT is reflected through our partnership with the Canberra Labor Club Group and is something that can only be maintained by the Club if they are able to remain a viable community asset.

We believe that the Clubs of the ACT play an invaluable role in our community.

Yours sincerely

Nathan Rickard
President
Belconnen Cats Junior AFL Club

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