

Additional Comments from the Australian Greens

- 1.1 The Australian Greens support the Chair's second report on corporate tax avoidance. However, we have strong concerns that the suite of recommendations contained in the first report are not being implemented; and that this second report has not proffered any further anti-avoidance measures.
- 1.2 The Australian public wants prompt and decisive action. They want a comprehensive response to the epidemic of corporate tax avoidance. At this stage, neither of the parties vying to form government have put forward policies that are proportionate to the scale of tax avoidance; and the government has provided only isolated responses to specific forms of tax evasion.
- 1.3 In recognition of the scale of the problem, the Australian Greens have released the most comprehensive response to tax avoidance that this country has ever seen,¹ with eighteen measures covering enforcement, public disclosure, tax reform and global agreement.
- 1.4 The Australian Greens encourage this policy package to be used as a template for the parliament. All parties need to work productively and cooperatively to secure a reliable tax base and to restore faith in the integrity of the tax system.
- 1.5 A particular priority for this committee and the parliament should be the establishment of a public register of beneficial ownership. This register would reveal the ultimate owners of trusts and incorporated entities where there is a valid public interest in doing so.²
- 1.6 Similarly, the establishment of a public register of tax settlements is an important public disclosure measure that can be enacted immediately. The register would detail: the company involved; the amount originally assessed as their tax liability; and the amount settled for. This would help dissuade companies from under-claiming their tax liabilities; and would give the ATO more bargaining power in negotiations.

Recommendation 1: That the government implements a comprehensive response to corporate tax avoidance, starting with the establishment of a public register of beneficial ownership and a public register of tax settlements.

Senator Peter Whish-Wilson

Senator for Tasmania

1 <http://greens.org.au/sites/greens.org.au/files/Tax%20Avoidance%20Package.pdf>

2 See: Recommendation 6, Australian Greens' Additional Comments, Economics References Committee First Report on Corporate Tax Avoidance

