



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Response to Cuts to Disability Support

Thank you for contacting me about people with disabilities.

Around £50 billion every year is being spent on benefits alone to support people with disabilities or health conditions. The Government will continue to spend more than Labour did in 2010 in every year to 2020. Benefits related to the additional costs of disability have been uprated every year, and households in receipt of these benefits are exempt from the benefit cap. The Secretary of State has confirmed there are no plans for further welfare savings over and above those already announced.

Instead, the Government is focussed on putting opportunity at the heart of our society. I believe that everyone, including people with disabilities, should have the same opportunity to fulfil their potential and live independent lives. In the last 12 months alone, 152,000 more disabled people have moved into work. However, there is more to do to meet our manifesto commitment to halve the disability employment gap; the Government is working closely with disabled people, their representatives, health care professionals and employers to achieve this.

The Work and Health Unit has been set up with over £115 million in funding, to develop effective interventions to help people with disabilities and health conditions to get in, stay in and return to work. The Government is also investing £43 million to trial ways to provide specialist support for people with mental health conditions, who often face particular difficulties in finding and keeping a job.

It is also important to put welfare spending on a sustainable footing. This is why recent reforms mean new claimants to Employment and Support Allowance will in future receive the same rate as those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance. While making these changes, the most vulnerable have continued to be protected; no current claimants will see their payments fall, nor will those in the Support Group be affected.

This reform has allowed a further £100 million of annual funding by 2020-21 for practical support to help claimants towards suitable work, as well as spending a further £15 million through the Flexible Support Fund on meeting the extra costs that can be involved in finding a job.

Thank you again for contacting me.

Kinds Regards,

Edward Timpson MP

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