



Department  
for Work &  
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The Baroness Campbell of Surbiton DBE  
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28 November 2016

Dear Irene,

Thank you for your letter, outlining how you contributed to the UN Committee's evidence gathering. I can assure you that this Government, and my department, place great value on the experiences, concerns and ideas of disabled people and disability organisations, and has great respect for the people who contributed to the inquiry. Unfortunately, I can only assume that there was a disconnect between the evidence gathered and the report produced.

I stand by my belief that the conclusions of grave and systematic violations are completely wide of the mark, and that the policies and practices in the UK do fulfil the obligations set out in the Convention. The report fails to place reform in the wider context of delivering a sustainable system that supports our fellow citizens who can and want to work, whilst protecting people for whom that is not possible.

Having a disability or serious health condition should not dictate the path a person is able to take in life, or in the workplace. I trust you will agree that the right type of work can have a positive effect on an individual's health and similarly that the right health support can have a positive effect on an individual's ability to flourish at work. That is why I was particularly pleased that the number of disabled people in work has increased by 590,000 in the past three years.

The Chancellor confirmed in his autumn statement that no further welfare savings are planned in this parliament other than those already announced. This Government is spending nearly £50bn a year on disabled people and people with health conditions which is over £6bn more than in 2010. In addition disability benefits have been protected from the benefit freeze, and people receiving PIP, DLA, the support component of ESA, Carer's or Guardian's Allowance are exempt from the benefit cap.

I am committed to making sure the welfare system works for disabled people. As I said at last week's Reform conference, it's about ensuring that from sick pay to fit notes, to practical support and assessments, we do all we can to support people in the right way, when they need us most. I don't want people's fate determined by difficult circumstances and a lack of proper support, when it should properly be determined by their own ambitions and talents.

Providing the support that's required cannot be a job for government alone, and we need to involve many players including health professionals, employers and a range of voluntary organisations. That is why we have launched the Work, Health and Disability Green Paper and are consulting widely with disabled people, employers, health professionals, and other stakeholders. I very much hope that you will play an active part in that consultation and that we can continue to engage in fruitful dialogue.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Damian', written in a cursive style.

**The Rt Hon Damian Green MP**

**SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WORK AND PENSIONS**