Witness Name: Lynne Kelly
Statement No:WITN3988001
Exhibits:WITN3988002-WITN3988093
Dated: 30 July 2020

EXHIBIT WITN3988092

E.R.

In his Budget statement, the Chancellor announced new help for disabled people who want to work. A new Disabled Person's Tax Credit will replace Disabled Working Allowance in October 1999. It will be more generous than Disabled Working Allowance and will help to ensure that disabled people who work will benefit financially. A new linking rule will be introduced from October this year which will take the financial risk out of taking a job that may not work out. Former claimants of long term incapacity benefits who lose a job within one year of taking it will be able to return to benefit at whatever rate they were previously being paid. This addresses a major disincentive to work in the benefits system, in which disabled people may lose as much as £45 a week in earned benefit entitlement on taking a job. Also from October this year, the 16 hour limit on voluntary work for IB and Severe Disablement Allowance claimants will be abolished, to enable them to gain experience of working before taking a further step into paid employment.

Around two million people of working age with disabilities and ill health are already in work, and we know that over a million more would like to work, either full or part time or at times when they are able - if they had the help and support to do so. That is why we have set aside up to £195 million from the Windfall Tax to fund a range of Welfare to Work initiatives for people with sickness and disabilities.

Since this initiative was announced in last July's Budget, we have been considering the funding of a number of innovative schemes to explore how best to help people move into, or stay in, work. A large number of bids to provide this service have been received from interested organisations. In partnership with voluntary organisations, a number of major employers are already taking part in this radical new approach for disabled people.

We have also been developing other proposals which include: introducing personal advisers to help sick and disabled people to overcome barriers to work, starting with a pilot service in October; an information campaign to improve knowledge of the existing provisions available to help people into work and to change attitudes of benefit recipients, employers and the public; a programme of research and evaluation to develop our understanding of our client group and to determine the effect of our initiatives; and the piloting of further measures to improve financial incentives to work. We are also taking steps to tackle the discrimination many disabled people face in getting work, by taking action on civil rights and establishing a new Disability Rights Commission. We have already set up a Disability Rights Task Force.

GRO-C

BARONESS HOLLIS OF HEIGHAM

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Michael Summers

GRO-C

September 1997

Dear Michael Summers
Now that the dust has settled I would like to take this opportunity to thank you personally for your support in the general election.

You helped us deliver a resounding victory in the Vale of Glamorgan. A new Labour MP working for a New Labour Government in Westminster. A Government which has already set about changing Britain and Wales for the better. Better schools, better hospitals, better job prospects and better standards in public office.

An important test for the New Labour Government will be the referendum on a Welsh Assembly on 18th September. The Prime Minister Tony Blair is delivering what he promised to the Welsh people. During the election he said that a Welsh Assembly is vital to help change Wales for the better.

I share that view and believe that an Assembly will be essential for our future prosperity. We will need a stronger voice in the new modern Britain of the next millennium to help us attract our fair share of investment and power in a more competitive world. We need a big yes vote in the Vale to ensure Wales gets the voice it deserves.

In the meantime, may I thank you once again for your past support and assure you that I will do my utmost to represent you effectively in Parliament. If I can ever be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me at my constituency office on 01446 743500 or, write to me direct at the House of Commons.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely,

GRO-C

John Smith MP

JOHN SMITH MP

M A Saunders

GRO-C

28 November 1997

Dear M A Saunders

Thank you for your letter received on [illegible]. I am pleased to have been able to assist.

GRO-C

John Smith MP

Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Minister for the Armed Forces

THE HAEMOPHILIA SOCIETY
Chesterfield House, GRO-C
GRO-C

26th February 1998

Dear Member,

Disability Benefits Under Threat

The Government is undertaking a review of social security and it is clear from letters leaked to the press that there are very real threats to disability benefits. However, the Government's plans have not yet been published and it is clear that there is disagreement at Cabinet level about whether disability benefits should be subject to cuts. It is vitally important and urgent therefore that you help us to make it clear to Parliament that disability benefits are essential in allowing you or a family member to enjoy independence and an adequate standard of living and that the consequences of cutting back on such benefits will mean hardship and social exclusion.

The Haemophilia Society is working together with other disability organisations through the Disability Benefits Consortium to put pressure on the Government and to counteract inaccurate media coverage of this issue. A meeting has been arranged with the Secretary of State for Social Security, Harriet Harman to take place in March.

What you can do to help the campaign:

Your support is essential if we are to be successful in protecting and extending disability benefits. You can do this in the following ways.

A lobby of Parliament is taking place on March 10th. The lobby will start at 2.30pm in Westminster Hall at the Houses of Parliament, Westminster, London SW1. There will be speeches from 3.00pm to 3.30pm. Please write to your MP in advance, telling them you will be there. Ask to see them to discuss your concerns about disability benefits. If you don't write in advance then you can fill in a "green card" on the day. Put your details on these and that your MP - if they are in the Commons that day - is called to come to speak to you. There is no guarantee that your MP will be available to see you, though they will at least know you were there to see them about the benefits issue.

OR

Contact your MP. Either write or go to see them and explain why your benefits are essential to you. (Let me know their response to your concerns)

PTO

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

2nd March 93

Dear Mr Simmons,

I acknowledge receipt of your recent letter.

I will indeed do what I can & get back to you.

Yours ever

GRO-C

JOHN SMITH MP

Mr M A Summers

GRO-C

5 March 1998

Dear Mr Summers

Further to your recent communication, I have taken up the matter you have raised and will correspond with you when I receive a substantive reply.

Yours sincerely

GRO-C

John Smith MP

Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Minister for the Armed Forces

Your Ref [illegible] HS Health

[illegible]

John Smith Esq MP

07 APR [illegible]

Dear John,

Thank you for your letter of 5 March to Frank Dobson, enclosing correspondence from Mr M A Summers concerning financial provision for people infected with hepatitis C through NHS treatment. I regret that you have not received an earlier reply.

I was sorry to read of the condition of Mr Summers's son and can appreciate how distressing this must be for all of the family.

As Mr Summers says in his letter, the Secretary of State met with the Haemophilia Society in September last year, and has corresponded with them since then. He had hoped to be able to reach a decision very quickly on the concerns which they had expressed. However while progress has been achieved in one area raised, the availability of recombinant Factor VIII to young people under 16 and new patients, it has not yet been possible for Mr Dobson to give a response on the issue of a special payment scheme for those with haemophilia infected with hepatitis C through NHS treatment. I do understand Mr Summers's wish to bring this matter to a close, but I hope he will understand that this is a very complex area and that Mr Dobson remains committed to exploring it fully before arriving at a decision.

GRO-C

BARONESS JAY OF PADDINGTON

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

JOHN SMITH MP

Mr Summers

GRO-C

22nd April 1998

Dear Mr Summers,

Please find enclosed a copy of a reply, in response to the matter you raised with me.

If it does not answer your concerns, please contact me again as I may be able to take the matter further.

GRO-C

Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Minister for the Armed Forces

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

JOHN SMITH MP

Mr Summers

GRO-C

14th May 1998

Dear Mr Summers,

Please find enclosed a copy of a reply in response to the matter you raised with me.

If it does not answer your concerns, please contact me again as I may be able to take the matter further.

Yours sincerely,

GRO-C

John Smith MP

Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Minister for the Armed Forces

Your ref: S/10774

PQ/HC/5662/1

John Smith Esq MP

27 OCT 1998

Dear John

Thank you for your letter of 9 October to Frank Dobson on behalf of your constituent Mr Paul Summers of 28 Tyle House. I appreciate your interest in a special payment scheme for people infected with hepatitis C through NHS treatment. I believe you have in mind the representations which the Haemophilia Society have made.

Ministers do appreciate that those who have been infected in this way, and their families, feel deep disappointment at the decision not to introduce such a scheme. When Frank Dobson announced the Government's decision on 28 July, he wrote to the Haemophilia Society explaining the reasons for the decision and stressing the particularly careful consideration which had been given to all the issues. He said that he had found the decision a very difficult one to make.

The Government's general policy is that compensation or other financial help to patients is only given to patients when the NHS or individuals working in it have been at fault. After looking at a number of different approaches to the question of special payments and thinking long and hard about the issues involved, Ministers decided that they could not make an exception to this general policy in the case of haemophiliacs infected with hepatitis C. The Government is funding a project, developed by the Haemophilia Society, which aims to meet the advice and information needs of young people with haemophilia who have been infected with hepatitis C.

I hope that Mr Summers will accept that the issues were very difficult in this case and that the most careful consideration was given to them.

Yours ever

GRO-C

THE BARONESS HAYMAN