



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

DLA Reform Team  
1st Floor  
Caxton House  
Tothill Street  
London  
SW1H 9NA

17<sup>th</sup> February 2011

Dear Madam/Sir,

Thank you for your invitation to take part in the Disability Living Allowance Consultation.

I welcome the Government's efforts to simplify and strengthen the benefits system. However, I would like to make the following representations on behalf of my constituents.

**Changes to the Mobility Component-** Many of my constituents are concerned about the future of the Mobility component. One constituent has a car as a result of the Motability scheme. He says that without his car he would not be able to travel to work. His disability means that he is only able to work part time and he could not afford a car without financial assistance.

The proposal to remove the mobility component from children in residential care or schools for more than 84 days may be damaging. Disabled children should be able to spend time with their families and lead an ordinary family life. This will not be possible for many children and families without financial support due to the high and unavoidable costs related to travel and leisure activities for disabled people.

**Reforms may be Detrimental to Children-** I am concerned that the Government's proposed reform to DLA may be detrimental to disabled children. DLA is a benefit that families with disabled children receive to help them meet additional costs of raising a disabled child. However some of the changes, when applied to children, reduce financial assistance to families.

The consultation paper asks whether or not we should take into account a child's support needs if they are being met from public funds by another institution, such as a school. Families with disabled children face higher costs in their day to day lives such as extra heating costs. Public institutions do not cover these living costs. If the Government was to take into account the funding that disabled children receive in schools when calculating their entitlement, this would fail to support families who would bear the additional costs associated with raising a disabled child.

**Considering Aids and Adaptations-** The Consultation documents also asks whether the assessment of a disabled person's ability should take into account any aids or adaptations

they use. It would potentially be damaging to penalise disabled people for having suitable equipment, such as a wheelchair. In the context of disabled children, it may reduce families' ability to contribute towards aids and adaptations that meet their child's wider needs.

Thank for considering my representations.

Yours faithfully,

