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UN Convention on Rights of People with Disabilities

Thank you for contacting me about the UN report on the rights of people with disabilities in the UK.

I strongly disagree with the conclusions reached in the report produced by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as does the Government. I cannot accept the report's conclusion that there is evidence of grave and systematic violation of the rights of disabled people, and the report fails to recognise all the progress that has been made to empower disabled people in all aspects of their lives.

I think we can be proud in this country of our record in supporting disabled people to lead more independent lives and participate more fully in society. A disability or health condition should not dictate the path a person is able to take in life. More than 20 years ago a previous Conservative Government legislated to protect disabled people's rights, and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 is recognised internationally as a model of anti-discrimination legislation.

The Government spends around £50 billion a year on benefits to support disabled people and people with health conditions. This amounts to around 2.5 per cent of GDP. According to OECD figures, that is more than is spent by all other rich G7 nations except Germany.

While the Government continues to improve and build on the support available to disabled people who are unable to work, more than half a million disabled people have also been helped to move into employment in the last four years. This is a record which the Government can be proud of. I think it is completely inappropriate to claim that the Government's policies are violating the rights of disabled people.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP