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Deaf and Disabled people are deeply fearful of the impact of a number of government policies all being taken forwards at the same time. On top of the devastating cuts to disability benefits, we are also concerned about the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) bill as well as recently announced government plans to scrap the care worker visa which will cost lives.

**THIS BILL DOES AFFECT US**

People with terminal conditions are Disabled under the Equality Act. Our membership includes people with neurodegenerative conditions, KJJJJJJJJJJJJJV BHGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGterminal illness and anorexia, all of whom are covered by the Bill. One in five benefit claimants given a prognosis of six months or less to live are still alive three years later. Disabled people are statistically more likely to experience domestic abuse and coercion and are among those most at risk from safeguarding weaknesses in the Bill.

**KEY CONCERNS**

**A Private Members Bill is not a suitable way to pass this legislation.** There was no pre-legislative scrutiny or consultation and debate time has been inadequate. Information about the bill has not been made accessible and passage through Parliament has been at a pace that is inaccessibly fast, making it difficult for Deaf and Disabled people to share our insights relevant to the Bill.

**The safeguards are too weak and have been watered down through Committee stage.** The high court judge has been replaced with a multi-disciplinary panel who may never meet the person applying for assisted suicide. Such a panel is needed at the start of the process to help identify whether what support and other changes could stop the person choosing this. The Mental Capacity Act is not an appropriate test for whether a person has a clear wish to die.

**We need to fix the foundations first.** The NHS, social care and mental health services are all broken. Palliative care is under-funded, facing cuts and those from disadvantaged communities are least likely to access it. The Bill impact assessment sets out the savings that legalisation is predicted to bring about. There is a real danger that assisted dying will replace publicly funded services and that the choice to receive support to continue living will be removed from those eligible for assistance to instead end their lives.

**DISABILITY BENEFIT CUTS AND ASSISTED DYING**

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