

Dear

I am writing to you as one of your constituents to express my deep concern about the Health and Social Care Bill.

I know that it is the policy of the Parliamentary Labour Party to oppose the Health and Social Care Bill and trust that you will vote against it at third reading. However I felt I must write to you to urge colleagues on the opposite benches to vote against or abstain at the very least. In particular those from Wales, Scotland and N. Ireland should vote against this Bill, since without doing that they would be punishing people in England with something that will not affect people in their own provinces.

At the Special Representative Meeting of the BMA held on 15.3.11 delegates representing doctors from all over the country voted overwhelmingly against competition and to ask the government to withdraw the Bill. In June The BMA asked for the amended Bill to be withdrawn and in July BMA Council endorse this and asked for a public campaign to achieve this end. Polls have shown that the overwhelming majority of doctors do not support this bill, which if passed as amended will destroy the NHS. Nurses are also opposed as their 99% vote of no confidence in Mr Lansley at their conference showed.

The 1997 Labour manifesto stated “Our fundamental purpose is simple but hugely important: to restore the NHS as a public service working cooperatively for patients, not a commercial business driven by competition.”

I feel it is time the Labour party restated this position publicly and stated that its actions whilst in power (which were in direct opposition to its 1997 manifesto commitment ) of trying to improve the NHS by using market mechanisms did not work and were a mistake. This has paved the way for the Coalition government to fully privatize the NHS which I believe is the ultimate purpose of this Bill. Mr Lansleys aims of putting patients at the heart of care, involving clinicians and reducing bureaucracy do not need legislation and the Bill should be scrapped and no further managers sacked. By getting rid of the purchaser/provider split as has been done in Scotland and Wales at least £10 billion a year could be saved-enough to cover the McKinsey driven £15-£20 billion of ‘efficiency savings’.

As Nick Clegg said ‘No bill is better than a bad bill’ and I cannot see how it can be amended to make it anything other than a bad bill. The effect of the pause, listening exercise, Future Forum report and government response has been to increase the complexity of the Bill but not to change its fundamental character. As Mr Lansley said to conservative backbenchers ‘no red lines have been crossed. The rushed process is an insult to MPs who were presented with the amended Bill just before you went on holiday and report stage and third reading are scheduled for the day after your return. Is this the new politics?’

Yours sincerely

(one of your constituents)