# Labour government's welfare cuts spark backlash



The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) under the new Labour government is pushing forward with a draconian plan to slash the welfare budget by £5 billion, a development that is raising alarm bells across the country. Liz Kendall, the DWP Secretary, has unveiled a series of reforms targeting the vulnerable, particularly those claiming sickness and disability benefits, igniting fierce criticism from numerous groups, including disability rights advocates.

In the House of Commons, more than 50 Labour backbenchers were seen questioning the rationale behind these brutal cuts, clearly indicating a significant fracture within the party. Charities have overwhelmingly condemned the proposed changes, branding them as "cruel and devastating." The planned reforms to shift assessments from Universal Credit to the Personal Independence Payment (PIP) system, while eliminating the Work Capability Assessment (WCA) by 2028, show an alarming lack of regard for public consultation. Advocacy groups have condemned the notion of consultation as a farce, slamming it as "bogus" for ignoring these deeply controversial proposals.

Kendall’s speech reaffirmed the government's commitment to these harsh measures, quipping that such changes are non-negotiable. What she fails to grasp is that these sweeping reforms could adversely affect millions of citizens who are already struggling. Currently, three million individuals depend on benefits such as PIP or Universal Credit, but the government’s response to rising incapacity claims, which have increased by around £19 billion in five years, has been to double down on punitive measures.

Concerns are mounting not just about the lack of consultation, but also about the chilling details that Kendall's team is trying to implement: freezing health-related Universal Credit payments, extending WCA reassessments until this drastic overhaul is complete, and enforcing tougher eligibility criteria for the PIP's daily living component. Advocacy groups like Benefits and Work have criticized the government's approach to consultation, accusing them of framing questions to mislead rather than genuinely engage with those affected.

Critics like Mikey Erhardt, Policy Officer at Disability Rights UK, have not held back in their assessment of the government's intentions. He argues that Kendall's proposed reforms reflect a reckless strategy driven by a desire to enforce cuts rather than support disabled individuals back into work. Factors such as rising retirement ages, prolonged NHS waiting lists, and inadequate educational and mental health resources for young disabled people are contributing to the surge in claims, yet the Labour government’s response is to punish those most in need.

In an additional alarming move, Labour’s Green Paper, titled 'Pathways to Work: Reforming Benefits and Support to Get Britain Working', proposes measures such as mandating more face-to-face assessments for health and disability support, introducing a scoring requirement of at least four points to qualify for higher-level PIP payments, and imposing restrictions on individuals under 22 claiming the health element of Universal Credit.

As these harsh reforms take shape, the Labour Party is grappling with considerable opposition from within its ranks and from advocacy groups alike. This struggle between economic strategy and welfare reform sets a troubling landscape for the future of millions of vulnerable citizens in the UK. The developments signal a stark reminder of the urgent need for alternative policies that prioritize the welfare of the people rather than reinforcing cuts that could push them further into hardship.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.the-independent.com/news/uk/politics/benefits-pip-universal-credit-disability-welfare-labour-cuts-b2717246.html> - This article corroborates the Labour government's plan to cut the welfare budget by £5 billion and the reforms targeting sickness and disability benefits, which have been criticized by charities and advocacy groups.
* <https://www.the-independent.com/news/uk/politics/benefits-pip-universal-credit-disability-welfare-labour-cuts-b2717246.html> - It also supports the information about the elimination of the Work Capability Assessment (WCA) by 2028 and the introduction of a 'right to try' policy for disabled benefit claimants.
* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sjE6zMj6iLg> - This video provides coverage of Liz Kendall's announcement regarding welfare reforms and the backlash from charities and trade unions, describing the proposals as 'immoral' and 'indefensible'.
* <https://www.the-independent.com/news/uk/politics/benefits-pip-universal-credit-disability-welfare-labour-cuts-b2717246.html> - The article further explains the government's plan to increase benefit reassessments and introduce additional support for employment, while also highlighting the criticism from over 100 charities.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This source provides the initial context for the article, detailing the Labour government's welfare reforms and the reactions from various advocacy groups.
* <https://www.the-independent.com/news/uk/politics/benefits-pip-universal-credit-disability-welfare-labour-cuts-b2717246.html> - It also mentions the concerns about the lack of genuine consultation and the potential adverse effects on millions of citizens relying on benefits like PIP or Universal Credit.
* <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/cost-of-living/dwp-slammed-bogus-benefit-cuts-31230856> - Please view link - unable to able to access data