

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

3rd June 2020

New Confidence,

RE: 'DEAF WORKS EVERYWHERE' – EDM 152.

Thank you for contacting me recently about the importance of supporting deaf young people into the workplace, with specific reference to Early Day Motion (EDM) 152; your comments upon which I read with great interest.

Notwithstanding the fact that as a Government Minister I am unable to sign EDMs, in any event, I have general concerns about the effectiveness and expense of the EDM system, and I think it is much more effective to raise concerns directly with Ministers, both verbally, and in writing, rather than signing EDMs.

Like you, I feel strongly that the many benefits of being in work should be open to all.

I welcome that a major review of special educational needs and disability provision has been launched, which will look at progress and long-term outcomes for children with additional needs and what more can be done to support them.

On top of this, there is significant support available to help people who need extra help to get into work. The 'Work and Health Programme', for example, is designed to help people who need tailored support to find employment. It will help 275,000 people over five years, including more than 200,000 disabled people.

The 'Access to Work' scheme provides practical and financial support with the additional costs faced by those whose health condition or disability affects the way they do their job. Disabled people can apply for a grant to fund support above the level of standard reasonable adjustments, to ensure that their health condition or disability does not hold them back in the workplace. Grants can be used to pay for special equipment, adaptations or support worker services, as well as support for getting to and from work. I am pleased to say that there is clear evidence of this supporting people who are deaf and hard of hearing, who constitute the largest group of users of 'Access to Work'. In 2018/19 'Access to Work' grants totalled £129 million, of which £45.8 million was in respect of this group.

Finally, the 'Disability Confident' scheme is working to change perceptions among employers to create more employment opportunities for disabled people. There are already 18,000 employers signed up to the 'Disability Confident' scheme, and their number continues to grow.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With best wishes,

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
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LISTENING TO YOU - CAMPAIGNING FOR YOU
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