

Weekly Political Update (extended)

24 October 2017

For further information on any of the parliamentary terms used in this document, please click [here](#).

Hearing aids and dementia

Click on link for source

<p>Written question on links between hearing loss and dementia, as identified in the Lancet</p>	<p>Bambos Charalambous MP (Labour, Enfield Southgate) has asked “<i>the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the Lancet Commission's recommendations on hearing loss in the report on dementia prevention, intervention and care, published in July 2017, what assessment he has made of the effect on dementia prevention proposals to restrict hearing aid provision for those with mild or moderate hearing loss.</i>”</p> <p>Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Health, Jackie Doyle-Price's response (Conservatives, Thurrock):</p> <p><i>“Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) are responsible for the provision of hearing aids for mild to moderate hearing loss within their local population. As with other services CCGs commission, they should take into consideration assessments of local need and any relevant guidance.</i></p> <p><i>To help inform and support commissioners in making local decisions, NHS England published, in July 2016, ‘Commissioning services for people with hearing loss: A framework for clinical commissioning groups’. The Framework acknowledges the benefits of addressing hearing loss in the prevention of conditions such as dementia.”</i></p>
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Access to healthcare

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<p>Written question on health services provided in BSL and steps to encourage GPs to provide prescriptions and medical appointments in BSL</p>	<p>Bill Esterson MP (Labour, Sefton Central) has asked “<i>the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department takes to provide (a) information on its services in British Sign Language (BSL) and (b) correspondence in BSL to people whose principal language is BSL; and what steps he has taken to encourage GPs and other practitioners to provide (i) prescriptions, (ii) details of medical appointments and (iii) other essential personal medical documents in BSL to people whose principal language is BSL.</i>”</p> <p>Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Health, Jackie Doyle-Price's response (Conservatives, Thurrock):</p> <p><i>“Departmental publications are available in British Sign Language (BSL) on request. The Department does not provide a correspondence service in BSL, nor has it received any requests for such a service.</i></p> <p><i>General practitioners and other health and care professionals have a legal duty to comply with the Accessible Information Standard, which sets out a series of requirements that organisations providing National Health Service care or publicly funded social care in England must follow. These include arranging for communication support, including support to BSL users, where this is needed for effective communication. The Standard does not direct how such support should be arranged or funded, as this is a matter for local decision.”</i></p>
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<p><u>Written question on whether measures will be brought forward to ensure that NHS111 and 101 services are accessible for deaf people</u></p>	<p>Grahame Morris MP (Labour, Easington) has asked <i>“the Secretary of State for Health, if he will bring forward proposals to ensure that the 101 and 111 services are accessible to people who suffer from deafness by facilitating the use of text by means of a registration form such as with the 999 service.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Health, Phillip Dunne’s response (Conservatives, Ludlow):</p> <p><i>“It is important that deaf people have the same access to the NHS111 service as people with hearing.</i></p> <p><i>There is a feature that allows deaf callers to register their phones and then report incidents to 999 in text form. Although this works for ambulance dispatch, it does not lend itself to a full telephone triage.</i></p> <p><i>The NHS111 service was made available to deaf people via the Text Relay Service when NHS111 was established, with BT Next Generation Text commencing around November 2015.</i></p> <p><i>Access to NHS111 has been further improved by the NHS111 British Sign Language (BSL) service, which uses video relay technology to connect patients to interpreters using a web-based client or via the ‘InterpreterNow’ app. The interpreter then makes a conventional phone call into NHS111 and acts as an intermediary between the patient and the NHS111 call handler. Deaf people can access the NHS111 BSL service using a webcam-enabled laptop or computer (via the NHS Choices website at www.nhs.uk/111) or using a smartphone or tablet via the ‘InterpreterNow’ app.”</i></p>
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Social care

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<p><u>Written question on whether the Government’s planned social care consultation will include working-age people</u></p>	<p>Dr Philippa Whitford (SNP, Central Ayrshire) has asked <i>“the Secretary of State for Health, whether his planned consultation on social care will include working-age disabled people’s social care.”</i></p> <p>Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health, Jackie Doyle-Price MP’s response (Conservatives, Thurrock):</p> <p><i>“The Care Act statutory guidance requires that where an adult or carer appears to have care and support needs the local authority must carry out an assessment. This is then followed by a financial assessment to determine whether or not they pay towards their care and support. Where a person is assessed as having eligible care and support needs, and meets the national eligibility threshold, then the local authority must meet their care needs.</i></p> <p><i>Social care continues to be a key priority for this Government. This is why local authorities in England will receive an additional £2 billion for social care over the next three years.</i></p> <p><i>We will work to improve social care and will bring forward proposals for consultation to build widespread support.</i></p> <p><i>The consultation will set out options to improve the social care system and to put it on a more secure financial footing, supporting people, families and communities to prepare for old age, and address issues related to the quality of care and variation in practice.</i></p> <p><i>The Government will make further announcements on the scope of the consultation in due course.”</i></p>
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<p><u>Written question on what steps the Department of Health are taking to address unmet social care needs among working-age disabled people</u></p>	<p>Dr Philippa Whitford (SNP, Central Ayrshire) has asked “<i>the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to address the unmet social care needs of working-age disabled people.</i>”</p> <p>Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health, Jackie Doyle-Price MP’s response (Conservatives, Thurrock):</p> <p><i>“The Care Act statutory guidance requires that where an adult or carer appears to have care and support needs the local authority must carry out an assessment. This is then followed by a financial assessment to determine whether or not they pay towards their care and support. Where a person is assessed as having eligible care and support needs, and meets the national eligibility threshold, then the local authority must meet their care needs.</i></p> <p><i>Social care continues to be a key priority for this Government. This is why local authorities in England will receive an additional £2 billion for social care over the next three years.</i></p> <p><i>We will work to improve social care and will bring forward proposals for consultation to build widespread support.</i></p> <p><i>The consultation will set out options to improve the social care system and to put it on a more secure financial footing, supporting people, families and communities to prepare for old age, and address issues related to the quality of care and variation in practice.</i></p> <p><i>The Government will make further announcements on the scope of the consultation in due course.”</i></p>
<p><u>Written question on what assessment has been made of the contribution of social care for working age disabled people and what plans are there to improve care</u></p>	<p>Stephen Timms MP (Labour, East Ham) has asked “<i>the Secretary of State for Health, what recent assessment he has made of the contribution of social care in supporting working-age disabled people into employment; and what plans he has for improvements to that care.</i>”</p> <p>Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Health, Jackie Doyle-Price’s response (Conservatives, Thurrock):</p> <p><i>“We have made no recent assessment.</i></p> <p><i>Local authorities provide a range of services to enable people to participate more fully in society including support to gain or maintain employment. Local authorities are responsible for deciding what services to provide to people with eligible care and support needs in accordance with local priorities and the needs of the communities to which they are accountable.</i></p> <p><i>For people with a learning disability or autism who are known to adult social care services, or those in contact with secondary mental health services, local authorities are working with the Department for Work and Pensions to test an approach to delivering supported employment, with payments based on employment outcomes.”</i></p>
<p><u>Written question on whether the Government will consult with disabled people and disability charities during its planned consultation on social care</u></p>	<p>Stephen Timms MP (Labour, East Ham) has asked “<i>the Secretary of State for Health, whether his planned consultation on social care will include consultations with (a) disabled people and (b) disability charities.</i>”</p> <p>Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Health, Jackie Doyle-Price’s response (Conservatives, Thurrock):</p>

	<p><i>“We will work to address the challenges of social care for our ageing population, bringing forward proposals for consultation to build widespread support.</i></p> <p><i>The Government has already invested an additional £2 billion to put social care on a more stable footing and alleviate short-term pressures across the health and care system. However, further reform is required to ensure that the system is prepared to meet the challenges of the increasing numbers of over 75s.</i></p> <p><i>To address these questions, the Government will work with partners at all levels, including those who use services and who work to provide care, to bring forward proposals for public consultation. The Government will consult on options to encourage a wider debate.</i></p> <p><i>The Government wants to hear a range of views from members of the public, representative groups, commissioners, providers, those using services and carers as it shapes its thinking. This is why we have set out our intention to consult and will set out more detail shortly.”</i></p>
<p><u>Oral health question on the number of people living with unmet social care need</u></p>	<p>Preet Kaur Gill MP (Labour, Birmingham Edgbaston) the following during oral health questions:</p> <p><i>“What estimate he has made of the number of people living with unmet social care needs.”</i></p> <p>Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health, Jackie Doyle Price MP’s response (Conservatives Thurrock):</p> <p><i>“By passing the Care Act 2014, this Government established a national eligibility threshold that defines the care needs that local authorities are required to meet. This eliminates the postcode lottery of eligibility across England. Social care continues to be a key priority for this Government. That is why local authorities in England will receive an additional £2 billion for social care over the next three years. In the longer term, we are committed to establishing adult social care on a fair and more sustainable basis.”</i></p> <p>Preet Kaur MP (Labour, Birmingham Edgbaston) then said <i>“...is it not time the Government just got “on with it”?</i></p> <p>Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health, Jackie Doyle Price MP’s responded by saying (Conservatives Thurrock):</p> <p><i>“...let me say that we are getting on with it, but we need a real cultural change in how we tackle these issues. There is a long-term issue to address in the fact that we are all living longer. This is not just going to need a sticking plaster; we will need to take the public with us. So this is not just another consultation; it is a vehicle for making sure that we as a society tackle this issue once and for all.”</i></p> <p>To read the full debate, please click on the link on the left.</p>
<p><u>Private notice question (Lords) on the recently published CQC report and the number or people not receiving care</u></p>	<p>Baroness Bakewell (Labour) has asked <i>“Her Majesty’s Government how they plan to respond to today’s Care Quality Commission report on the state of Adult Social Care in England in which it states that “some 1.2 million people are not receiving the help they need, an increase of 18% on last year.”</i></p> <p>Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health, Lord O’Shaughnessy’s response (Conservatives):</p>

“My Lords, the Government are committed to improving the quality and availability of adult social care in England. That is why we passed the Care Act in 2014 to provide for the first time a national eligibility threshold for care. It is why we are investing £2 billion more in social care provision over the next three years and have plans to reform how care is funded for the long term.”

Baroness Bakewell (Labour) replied *“My Lords, the situation in social care is deteriorating and the Government’s strategy to handle the challenge is inadequate. The situation is getting worse because of the fundamental change in the demographic of this country. Some 15,000 people are now 100 years old, and the size of that cohort is increasing. Surgeries are closing, hospitals are inadequate, and 1.2 million people are unpaid carers and themselves over the age of 65. This calls for a radical, fundamental response, rather than the usual Green Paper and sums of money. That is not enough. This country faces a crisis of demographic change.”*

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health, Lord O’Shaughnessy’s response (Conservatives):

“I agree in part with what the noble Baroness said in the sense that demographic change represents a big challenge. She mentioned the over-100s. The population of over-85s will double between now and 2037. As the CQC report makes clear, many of those people will have difficulty with the basic behaviours and actions they need to be able to live independently. That is the big challenge that we face. The report provides a very honest exposure of strengths and weaknesses in the current system. The strengths are there, though the noble Baroness perhaps did not give them as much credit as they deserve. The report says:

Overall, the quality of care remains relatively stable, with the majority of all care rated as good and improvements in some services”.

Indeed, only 1% of services are rated inadequate. Clearly we want that percentage to be zero but it is better than in other sectors. I do not disagree with the noble Baroness about the demographic challenges we face. As I said in my first Answer, we are trying to put more funding in, to recruit more staff and raise quality now that we have this national threshold. We hope to decrease variation and then look for a long-term solution that will solve this problem that we have all been wandering around for the last 20 years.”

To read more, please click on the link on the left.

[Oral question on adult social care services](#)

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath (Labour) has asked *“Her Majesty’s Government what is their response to the conclusion of the Care Quality Commission in its annual state of care report that 1.2 million adults are not getting the care they need as the health and social care system is “straining at the seams”.*

Lord O’Shaughnessy (Conservative) response:

“My Lords, the Government are committed to improving the quality and availability of adult social care in England. The Care Act 2014 introduced, for the first time, a national eligibility threshold for care, and the Government are increasing funding for social care by £2 billion over the next three years to meet growing demand.”

Lord Hunt replied *“My Lords, two days ago, in answering a Question on this report, the Minister spoke of a 20-year search for consensus on the funding of long-term care. We had consensus about the Dilnot proposals which capped the amount a person would have to contribute to their own care. The Opposition co-operated with the Government in getting the 2014 Act through Parliament and the Government*

	<p><i>announced the cap at £72,000, but then they postponed its introduction and in the election they effectively abandoned it. No explanation has ever been given to Parliament about why the Dilnot proposals have been abandoned.”</i></p> <p>Lord O’Shaughnessy (Conservatives) said “ <i>I think the one thing I regret is that 15 or 20 years ago when we could see the change in the population the NHS did not change its model of care”.</i></p> <p><i>This is something we have all grappled with, but we have not yet come up with the solution that we need. That is why, through this consultation, we will be looking not just at finance, but at quality of care, variation and sustainable staffing to rebuild the consensus that we need to move forward.</i></p> <p>Lord Davies of Stamford (Labour) said “<i>I shall give the Minister another chance. He did not even begin to answer the question from my noble friend Lord Hunt. Why did the Government drop Dilnot?”</i></p> <p>The Minister, Lord O’Shaughnessy (Conservatives) responded:</p> <p><i>“The Government have not dropped Dilnot. We will be consulting on both the cap and the floor in the proposals that come forward on social care funding, which build on the Dilnot proposals.”</i></p> <p>To read the statement in full, please click on the link on the left</p>
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Employment

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<p><u>Oral work and pensions question on the impact of the Access to Work cap on deaf people</u></p>	<p>Lilian Greenwood MP (Labour, Nottingham South) stated “<i>the all-party parliamentary group on deafness recently heard compelling evidence about the disproportionate and damaging impact the cap on awards under the Access to Work scheme is having on people who use British sign language as their first language, with deaf people having job offers withdrawn, withdrawing from their roles and giving up on their careers. The Government say they are committed to improving disabled people’s opportunities at work, but this policy is destroying them. Will the Minister think again?”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt’s response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):</p> <p><i>“We have looked in great detail at many aspects of Access to Work, and although it is a popular scheme, there are many things we want to change in it. I very much recognise that the scheme is not just about giving someone a piece of technology to enable them to communicate; it is about giving them the services they need to be their best—to thrive and to be their most creative in the workplace. For some, that will involve British sign language interpreters. This is very much an area we are looking at, and it will be something we bring forward and report back on in the health and work road map.”</i></p>
<p><u>Written question on what interim support is available to deaf people between the start of a new job and an</u></p>	<p>Chair of the APPG on Deafness, Jim Fitzpatrick MP (Labour, Poplar and Limehouse) has asked “<i>the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what interim support is available for deaf people between the start of a new job and when an Access to Work workplace assessment is carried out.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt’s response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):</p>

<p><u>Access to Work workplace assessment</u></p>	<p><i>“Access to Work (AtW) aims to supply help as quickly as possible, but where there are unavoidable delays, interim solutions may be considered. These will vary according to individual customers’ needs and situations. In such cases, AtW Advisers will inform customers and employers of likely delays and discuss interim support options.</i></p> <p><i>We are continuously engaging with stakeholders to explore how the customer journey can be improved. For example, in June 2017 the new contract for AtW workplace assessments came into effect, changing the workplace assessments target. The new contract requires 90% of assessments to be carried out in 8 days, rather than the 10 days that was previously the case. This is intended to expedite the provision of support to AtW customers.</i></p> <p><i>We will publish our response to “Improving Lives: The Work, Health, and Disability Green Paper” this autumn, in which we will explore options for improving the service offered through AtW.”</i></p>
<p><u>Written question on what discussions the Secretary of State for Work Pensions has had on incorporating disability employment policy into the wider industrial strategy</u></p>	<p>Shadow Minister for Disabled People, Marsha De Cordova MP (Labour, Battersea) has asked <i>“the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on incorporating disability employment policy in the wider industrial strategy.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Claire Perry MP’s response (Conservatives, Devizes):</p> <p><i>“Ministers and officials in the Department have regular discussions with the Department for Work and Pensions about a range of issues including disability employment, industrial strategy and the Taylor Review of Modern Working Practices.</i></p> <p><i>Areas of collaboration between our Departments include those outlined in the publications “Fuller Working Lives: a partnership approach” and “Work, Health and Disability: Improving Lives”. Our Industrial Strategy’s core objective will be to boost earning power for everyone; an inclusive economic policy is vital in achieving this.”</i></p>
<p><u>Written question on when the Government will respond to its Work, Health and Disability Green Paper</u></p>	<p>Chair of the Science and Technology Select Committee, Norman Lamb MP (Liberal Democrats, North Norfolk) has asked <i>“the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when his Department plans to respond to its consultation on the Work, Health and Disability Green Paper; and if he will make a statement.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt’s response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):</p> <p><i>“Improving Lives; the Work, Health and Disability Green Paper was published on 31 October 2016 and the consultation closed on 17 February 2017. The Green Paper explored a range of ways to improve the prospects and transform the lives of disabled people by removing barriers that prevent them from working, and helping ensure that they are able to remain in employment. We received over 6000 of responses and engaged in a wide range of conversations with stakeholders during the consultation period, supported by over 166 accessible events held across England, Scotland, and Wales. We are now carefully considering the consultation responses and next steps for longer-term reform and will set these out in due course.”</i></p>
<p><u>Written question on the effect on business inactivity in the labour market among people</u></p>	<p>Chair of the Science and Technology Select Committee, Norman Lamb MP (Liberal Democrats, North Norfolk) has asked <i>“the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment his Department has made of the effect on businesses of inactivity in the labour market among people who have a (a) disability and (b) chronic mental health condition.”</i></p>

<p><u>who have a disability</u></p>	<p>Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt's response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):</p> <p><i>"In October 2016, my department in conjunction with the Department of Health, published, Improving Lives: the Work, Health and Disability Green Paper which included a range of data of the impact of inactivity on the labour market, including our estimate that ill health among working age people which prevents them from working, costs the economy around £100 billion a year and related sickness absence costs employers £9 billion a year.</i></p> <p><i>This Government is committed to building a country that works for everyone. The package of initiatives announced in Improving Lives aims to improve the employment prospects of those with disabilities and health conditions; helping them to realise their potential and enabling employers' to benefit from a large, valuable and under-used section of the labour market."</i></p>
<p><u>Written question on the proportion of people with a disability who are employed; inactive in the labour market or unemployed</u></p>	<p>Chair of the Science and Technology Select Committee, Norman Lamb MP (Liberal Democrats, North Norfolk) has asked <i>"the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the proportion of people with a disability who are (a) employed, (b) inactive in the labour market and (c) unemployed; and what proportion of those people employed in (i) large businesses, (ii) medium-sized businesses and (iii) small businesses have a disability."</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt's response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):</p> <p><i>"Employment status</i></p> <p><i>Data on the proportion of working age disabled people who were employed, inactive and unemployed is published by the Office for National Statistics using the Labour Force Survey. The latest data for Q2 2017 can be found using the following link:</i> https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/datasets/labourmarketstatusofdisabledpeoplea08</p> <p><i>In the United Kingdom, over the last four years the employment rate of disabled people has increased by nearly 6 percentage points from 43.6% in Q2 2013 to 49.2% in Q2 2017. There are now almost 600,000 more disabled people in work than four years ago, with almost 3.5 million disabled people in employment.</i></p> <p><i>Business Size</i></p> <p><i>As part of the Work, Health and Disability Green Paper we have published information based on the size of people's workplaces for Q2 2016 using the Labour Force Survey. This data can be found in Table 1h using the following link:</i> https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/641240/work-health-and-disability-green-paper-data-pack-supporting-tables.xlsx</p> <p><i>Self-employment</i></p> <p><i>The latest published figures from the Labour Force Survey, covering Q4 2016, show that the proportion of people in Great Britain who are self-employed who have a disability is 13%.</i></p> <p><i>Source: Labour Force Survey, available at:</i> https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/adhocs/006673economicactivityofpeoplewithdisabilitiesbyemploymenttypeaged16to64apriltojune2013onwardsgreatbritain</p> <p><i>Note</i></p>

<p><u>Written question of the number of disabled people who are self-employed</u></p>	<p><i>Please note that the latest data from the Labour Force Survey covers Q2 (April to June) 2017. However, we have used the latest publicly available data for each request which is why different time periods are used.</i></p> <p>Chair of the Science and Technology Select Committee, Norman Lamb MP (Liberal Democrats, North Norfolk) has asked <i>“the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the proportion of people who are self-employed who have a disability.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt’s response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):</p> <p><i>“Employment status</i></p> <p><i>Data on the proportion of working age disabled people who were employed, inactive and unemployed is published by the Office for National Statistics using the Labour Force Survey. The latest data for Q2 2017 can be found using the following link:</i></p> <p>https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/datasets/labourmarketstatusofdisabledpeoplea08</p> <p><i>In the United Kingdom, over the last four years the employment rate of disabled people has increased by nearly 6 percentage points from 43.6% in Q2 2013 to 49.2% in Q2 2017. There are now almost 600,000 more disabled people in work than four years ago, with almost 3.5 million disabled people in employment.</i></p> <p><i>Business Size</i></p> <p><i>As part of the Work, Health and Disability Green Paper we have published information based on the size of people’s workplaces for Q2 2016 using the Labour Force Survey. This data can be found in Table 1h using the following link:</i></p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/641240/work-health-and-disability-green-paper-data-pack-supporting-tables.xlsx</p> <p><i>Self-employment</i></p> <p><i>The latest published figures from the Labour Force Survey, covering Q4 2016, show that the proportion of people in Great Britain who are self-employed who have a disability is 13%.</i></p> <p><i>Source: Labour Force Survey, available at:</i></p> <p>https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/adhocs/006673economicactivityofpeoplewithdisabilitiesbyemploymenttypeaged16to64apriltojune2013onwardsgreatbritain</p> <p><i>Note</i></p> <p><i>Please note that the latest data from the Labour Force Survey covers Q2 (April to June) 2017. However, we have used the latest publicly available data for each request which is why different time periods are used.”</i></p>
<p><u>Written question on how self-employed people can meet the Access to Work certification by an employer or support worker</u></p>	<p>Shabana Mahmood MP (Labour, Birmingham Ladywood) has asked <i>“the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how self-employed people can meet the Access to Work certification requirement by an employer or support worker.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt’s response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):</p> <p><i>“The criteria for meeting the Access to Work certification requirement for self-employment are laid out in the Access to Work DWP Staff Guide, which is publicly available on GOV.UK through the following link:</i></p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-work-staff-guide</p>

	<p><i>In the current guidance, for Access to Work purposes, a self-employed person is classed as someone who is:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>operating a business either on their own account or in partnership; or working for an employer on a self-employed contractual basis'</i> • <i>operating a franchised business on a self-employed basis</i> • <i>running a business that satisfies the past or prospective viability tests (such as achieving a minimum level of turnover each year - this level is currently set at the Lower Earnings Limit (LEL) of £5,824 per annum), and</i> • <i>possessing a Unique Tax Reference Number (UTR)</i> <p><i>Self-employed people can meet the Access to Work certification requirement by providing a UTR; and either of the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>accounts for an established businesses; or,</i> • <i>a business plan of a standard acceptable to a bank or other financial institution."</i>
<p><u>Written question on why Access to Work forms require certification by an employer or support worker</u></p>	<p>Shabana Mahmood MP (Labour, Birmingham Ladywood) has asked <i>"the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, why Access to Work claim forms require certification by an employer or support worker."</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt's response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):</p> <p><i>"The Department for Work and Pensions has an obligation to handle public resources to high standards of probity, including standards of accountability and transparency, and this duty requires that there are clear audit trails for transactions involving public funds. In order to meet the necessary standards, we have to ensure that the evidence supporting decisions regarding Access to Work awards is current and relevant.</i></p> <p><i>Access to Work can provide support of up to a maximum of £42,100 per year beyond that which is required from employers as reasonable adjustments. The process of deciding and recording an award requires a number of pieces of evidence, including evidence of what reasonable adjustment has been put in place by an employer."</i></p>
<p><u>Written question on the effectiveness of the work capability assessment in supporting disabled people into work</u></p>	<p>Stephen Timms MP (Labour, East Ham) has asked <i>"the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the work capability assessment in supporting disabled people into work; and if he will make a statement."</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt's response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):</p> <p><i>"We have responded to a range of recommendations from five Independent Reviews.</i></p> <p><i>In addition, we have consulted through the Work and Health Green Paper how we might improve the assessment process, and how we can use information more effectively to support this group in the future."</i></p>
<p><u>Written question on whether the Government will reform statutory sick pay as part</u></p>	<p>Stephen Timms MP (Labour, East Ham) has asked <i>"the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans he has to reform statutory sick pay as part of his Department's work to support more disabled people into employment."</i></p>

of its work to support disabled people into employment

Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt's response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):

"In the Improving Lives Green Paper we consulted on how Statutory Sick Pay could be reformed to encourage supportive conversations between the employer and employee and make it easier for people to make a phased return to work. We are now considering the full range of consultation responses and next steps on Statutory Sick Pay.

We welcome Matthew Taylor's 'Good Work - Modern Working Practices' and his detailed consideration of statutory sick pay. We are considering his recommendations in detail and will respond in due course."

Written question on the number of people with a disability or long-term condition are in work compared with 2010

Former Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Justin Tomlinson MP (Conservatives, North Swindon) has asked *"the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many more people with a disability or long-term health condition are in work compared with 2010."*

Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt's response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):

"The Government is committed to supporting people with disabilities and long term health conditions to enter, remain in, and return to work, to deliver the health benefits that good work brings.

Table 1 below shows the estimated number of people in work with a disability or long-term health condition for quarter 2 of each year from 2010 to 2017. Due to a change in the definition of disability in 2013, estimates before and after this date should not be compared.

From 2010-2012 the number of people in work with a disability increased by 23,000, from 3.244 million to 3.266 million. The number of people in work with a long term health condition decreased by 31,000 from 7.273 million to 7.243 million.

From 2013-2017 the number of people in work with a disability increased by 596,000 from 2.897 million to 3.492 million. The number of people in work with a long term health condition increased by 595,000 from 6.847 million to 7.442 million.

Table 1: Number of people in work with a disability or long-term health condition for quarter 2 of each year from 2010 to 2017, UK

	Number of people with a disability in work (thousands)	Number of people with a long-term health condition in work (thousands)
Q2 2010	3,244	7,273
Q2 2011	3,275	7,368
Q2 2012	3,266	7,243
Q2 2013	2,897	6,847
Q2 2014	3,026	6,794
Q2 2015	3,257	7,077

Q2 2016	3,388	7,239
Q2 2017	3,492	7,442

Source: Labour Force Survey, available at:
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/datasets/labourmarketstatusofdisabledpeoplea08>.

But we know that there is much more that needs to be done, so that everyone who can work is given the right support and opportunities to do so. That is why we published Improving Lives; the Work, Health and Disability Green Paper, which set out the action we plan to take to achieve this and start a far-reaching, national debate on what more we can do to ensure everyone is supported to reach their full potential. The Government is currently carefully considering next steps.”

Written question on the introduction of tailored employment support for disabled people looking for work

Heidi Allen MP (Conservatives, South Cambridgeshire) has asked “the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what progress has been made towards introducing personalised and tailored employment support for disabled people who are looking for work.”

Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt’s response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):

“From April 2017, as announced in the Green Paper, Improving Lives, we rolled out the new Personal Support Package (PSP) for people with health conditions. So far we have recruited 300 new Disability Employment Advisers, allocated £15 million to the Flexible Support Fund, made changes to the permitted work rules, and almost completed the roll out of the Health and Work Conversation. This is in line with our ambition to provide a support system which can be tailored to individuals’ needs. As part of the PSP, we have been rolling out a £330m package from April 2017, delivering a broad range of employment and health support for new ESA Work Related Activity Group and UC Limited Capability for Work claimants. For those claimants, the national employment support provision has been expanded and extended so that there are spaces available on Work Choice and Specialist Employability Support. This will also apply to the Work and Health Programme when it is rolled out from November 2017. We have introduced Community Partners to Jobcentres across Great Britain, peer support Journey to Employment job clubs and deployed trained Small Employer Advisors to deliver the Small Employer Offer.”

Written question on whether they have regional strategies to reduce disability employment gap

Kate Green MP (Labour, Stretford and Urmston) has asked “the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether his Department has regional strategies for reducing the disability employment gap.”

Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt’s response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):

“The Government is committed to improving employment outcomes for disabled people. The manifesto commitment gives a clear and time-bound goal to achieve this, which is to see 1 million more disabled people into work over the next 10 years. Since quarter 1 2016, the number of working aged disabled people in employment has increased by around 170,000 to 3.5 million in quarter 1 2017. The disability

employment rate has increased by over 2 percentage points and now stands at 49 per cent.

The number of disabled people in employment, according to the Labour Force Survey, is publicly available here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/datasets/labourmarketstatusofdisabledpeoplea08>

*We know that there is much more that needs to be done, so that everyone who can work is given the right support and opportunities to do so. That is why we published *Improving Lives: the Work, Health and Disability Green Paper*, which set out the action we plan to take to achieve this and start a far-reaching, national debate on what more we can do to ensure everyone is supported to reach their full potential. We are considering next steps, taking account of the Green Paper consultation, and will set out our response to this and future plans in due course, including supporting local effort and reporting arrangements.”*

Written question on whether the Secretary of State will regularly report to Parliament on the disability employment gap

Kate Green MP (Labour, Stretford and Urmston) has asked “*the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will make it his policy to report annually to Parliament on progress in tackling the disability employment gap as part of the annual report on full employment.*”

Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt’s response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):

“The Government is committed to improving employment outcomes for disabled people. The manifesto commitment gives a clear and time-bound goal to achieve this, which is to see 1 million more disabled people into work over the next 10 years.

Since quarter 1 2016, the number of working aged disabled people in employment has increased by around 170,000 to 3.5 million in quarter 1 2017. The disability employment rate has increased by over 2 percentage points and now stands at 49 per cent.

The number of disabled people in employment, according to the Labour Force Survey, is publicly available here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/datasets/labourmarketstatusofdisabledpeoplea08>

*We know that there is much more that needs to be done, so that everyone who can work is given the right support and opportunities to do so. That is why we published *Improving Lives: the Work, Health and Disability Green Paper*, which set out the action we plan to take to achieve this and start a far-reaching, national debate on what more we can do to ensure everyone is supported to reach their full potential. We are considering next steps, taking account of the Green Paper consultation, and will set out our response to this and future plans in due course, including supporting local effort and reporting arrangements.”*

Written question on what plans the Government have to reduce the disability employment gap

Kate Green MP (Labour, Stretford and Urmston) has asked “*the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans his Department has to reduce the disability employment gap.*”

Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt’s response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):

“The Government is committed to improving employment outcomes for disabled people. The manifesto commitment gives a clear and time-bound goal to achieve this, which is to see 1 million more disabled people into work over the next 10 years.

	<p>Since quarter 1 2016, the number of working aged disabled people in employment has increased by around 170,000 to 3.5 million in quarter 1 2017. The disability employment rate has increased by over 2 percentage points and now stands at 49 per cent.</p> <p>The number of disabled people in employment, according to the Labour Force Survey, is publicly available here:</p> <p>https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/datasets/labourmarketstatusofdisabledpeoplea08</p> <p>We know that there is much more that needs to be done, so that everyone who can work is given the right support and opportunities to do so. That is why we published <i>Improving Lives: the Work, Health and Disability Green Paper</i>, which set out the action we plan to take to achieve this and start a far-reaching, national debate on what more we can do to ensure everyone is supported to reach their full potential. We are considering next steps, taking account of the Green Paper consultation, and will set out our response to this and future plans in due course, including supporting local effort and reporting arrangements.”</p>
<p><u>Written question on when the Government plans to respond to the responses of his Work, Health and Disability: Improving Lives consultation</u></p>	<p>Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Debbie Abrahams MP (Oldham East and Saddleworth) has asked “<i>the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when his Department plans to respond to the responses to his Department’s consultation entitled, Work, Health and Disability: Improving Lives; and whether he plans to publish a White Paper on that subject.</i>”</p> <p>Minister for Disabled People, Penny Mordaunt MP’s response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):</p> <p><i>“Improving Lives; the Work, Health and Disability Green Paper was published on 31 October 2016 and the consultation closed on 17 February 2017. The Green Paper explored a range of ways to improve the prospects and transform the lives of disabled people by removing barriers that prevent them from working, and helping ensure that they are able to remain in employment. We received around 6000 responses and engaged in a wide range of conversations with stakeholders during the consultation period. We are now carefully considering the consultation responses and next steps for longer-term reform and will set these out in the autumn.”</i></p>
<p><u>Oral work and pensions question on what progress has been made to increase the employment rate for disabled people</u></p>	<p>Kate Green MP (Labour, Stretford and Urmston) has asked “<i>What progress has been made on increasing the employment rate for disabled people.</i>”</p> <p>Minister for Disabled People, Penny Mordaunt MP’s response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):</p> <p><i>“The employment rate among disabled people has increased to 49%, and the Government are committed to getting 1 million more disabled people into work over the next 10 years.”</i></p> <p>Kate Green MP then stated “<i>In 2015, the Minister said the Government’s aim was to halve the disability employment gap by 2020, and in 2016 the Social Market Foundation said that that meant an extra 1.2 million disabled people in employment, but now the Minister tells us that the ambition is for an extra 1 million disabled people</i></p>

	<p><i>in work within 10 years. Why are Ministers becoming less ambitious for disability employment?”</i></p> <p>Minister for Disabled People, Penny Mordaunt MP’s response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):</p> <p><i>“...we will look in great detail at the local numbers—for example, the numbers of people with a learning disability coming out of education; that is what we need to get people focused on.”</i></p> <p>To read in full, please click on the link on the left</p>
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Disability benefits

Click on link for source

<p><u>Written question on when the digital application process will be introduced for deaf people claiming personal independence payments</u></p>	<p>Chair of the APPG on Deafness, Jim Fitzpatrick MP (Labour, Poplar and Limehouse) has asked <i>“the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when his Department plans to introduce a digital application process that is accessible for deaf people claiming personal independence payment.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt’s response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):</p> <p><i>“The Government is committed to modernising and digitalising public services, and in the longer term, plans to develop a joined up digital journey for claimants with health and disability needs. However due to the fiscal constraints the Department cannot commit to a timescale for achieving our aspiration to further modernise technology in this area at this time. Currently deaf claimants are able to write in to ask for a paper claim form and the Department also offers “next generation text” and a video relay service.</i></p> <p><i>We are considering options as to how we are able to provide a digital process in line with the recommendations of the second independent review of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) assessments.”</i></p>
<p><u>Written question on the number of personal independence payment appeals that have been made by deaf claimants and how many were successful</u></p>	<p>Chair of the APPG on Deafness, Jim Fitzpatrick MP (Labour, Poplar and Limehouse) has asked <i>“the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many personal independence payment appeals have been made to the Social Security Tribunals by deaf claimants; and how many of those appeals have been successful.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt’s response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):</p> <p><i>“The following table gives volumes of appeals lodged and overturned by year for claimants with a hearing disorder. Appeals lodged are given by the year the appeal was registered. Appeals cleared are appeals where a decision has been made and are given by the year the appeal was cleared. Appeals overturned are appeals where the DWP decision has been changed and are given by the year the appeal was cleared.</i></p>

	Appeals Lodged	Appeals Cleared	Appeals Overturned
2013/14	#	#	#
2014/15	300	100	#
2015/16	700	600	300
2016/17	1,100	900	500
2017/18 (data until April'17)	#	100	100

*Figures have been rounded to the nearest 100.

**'#' used for instances where there are less than 50 cases.

Written question on what training health professional carrying out personal independence payment assessments receive on deafness

Written question on which Departments were consulted regarding the exemption criteria for employment and support allowance reassessments

Chair of the APPG on Deafness, Jim Fitzpatrick MP (Labour, Poplar and Limehouse) has asked *“the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what training health professionals carrying out personal independence payment assessments receive on deafness.”*

Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt’s response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):

“Both Assessment Providers are required to ensure that the Health Professionals (HPs) carrying out assessments have knowledge of the clinical aspects and likely functional effects of a wide range of health conditions and impairments including deafness.

All HPs receive comprehensive training in disability analysis. This includes specific case studies and guidance which covers how a person who is deaf, or has a hearing impairment, is likely to be affected in their day-to-day activities. All HPs are required to complete this training before they can be approved to carry out assessments on our behalf.

The Department and our Providers work with a wide range of organisations, including those who represent people who are deaf or have a hearing impairment in order to continuously improve the service provided, including strengthening deaf awareness training material for HPs.”

Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Debbie Abrahams MP (Labour, Oldham East and Saddleworth) has asked *“the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, which organisations his Department consulted when drawing up the criteria for exemption from employment and support allowance reassessments for people with long-term health conditions.”*

Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt’s response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):

“This change will come into effect in autumn 2017 and will apply to those with the most severe health conditions and disabilities who are placed in Employment and Support Allowance’s Support Group and the Universal Credit equivalent.

	<p><i>We are working with stakeholders to finalise the criteria, once completed, the amended guidance will be incorporated into the Work Capability Assessment Handbook published annually on GOV.UK. This change will be reflected in the summer 2018 update.</i></p> <p><i>Through the development of the criteria we have consulted with a range of organisations, including representatives from some of the major health and disability charities through a stakeholder representative group.”</i></p>
<p><u>Written question on when the exemption criteria for employment and support allowance will be published</u></p>	<p>Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Debbie Abrahams MP (Labour, Oldham East and Saddleworth) has asked <i>“the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when he plans to publish the criteria for exemption from employment and support allowance reassessments for people with long-term health conditions.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt’s response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):</p> <p><i>“This change will come into effect in autumn 2017 and will apply to those with the most severe health conditions and disabilities who are placed in Employment and Support Allowance’s Support Group and the Universal Credit equivalent.</i></p> <p><i>We are working with stakeholders to finalise the criteria, once completed, the amended guidance will be incorporated into the Work Capability Assessment Handbook published annually on GOV.UK. This change will be reflected in the summer 2018 update.</i></p> <p><i>Through the development of the criteria we have consulted with a range of organisations, including representatives from some of the major health and disability charities through a stakeholder representative group.”</i></p>
<p><u>Written question on what assessment has been made of the adequacy of employment and support allowance levels</u></p>	<p>Neil Coyle MP (Labour, Bermondsey and Old Southwark) has asked <i>“the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of employment and support allowance payment levels; and if he will undertake a review of the adequacy of the financial support provided for people who are in the employment and support allowance work-related activity group.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt’s response (Conservatives, Portsmouth North):</p> <p><i>“The Government published its assessment of the impacts of the change to the work-related activity component on 20 July 2015.</i> <i>http://www.parliament.uk/documents/impact-assessments/IA15-006B.pdf”</i></p>

Sign language

Click on link for source

<p><u>Written question on what steps the Department for Education take to ensure that services are</u></p>	<p>Bill Esterton MP (Labour, Sefton Central) has asked <i>“the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department takes to provide (a) information on its services in British Sign Language (BSL) and (b) correspondence in BSL to people whose principal language is BSL.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Education, Robert Goodwill MP’s response (Conservatives, Scarborough and Whitby):</p>
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<p><u>provided in BSL</u></p>	<p><i>“The Department publishes information on its services on GOV.UK. This content meets legal accessibility requirements and can be read by assistive technology. Documents published by the department can be requested in an alternative format in line with the Equalities Act 2010, this includes British Sign Language. The Department can also engage with correspondence from individuals using British Sign Language if that is the preferred format. The Department is committed to ensuring young people who use British Sign Language gain the skills they need. In January 2017, we announced that for the first time, British Sign Language will be accepted as an alternative qualification to functional skills in English for apprentices where BSL is their first language.”</i></p>
<p><u>Written question on what steps the Department for Work and Pensions is taking to ensure services are provided in BSL</u></p>	<p>Bill Esterton MP (Labour, Sefton Central) has asked <i>“the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department takes to provide (a) information on its services in British Sign Language (BSL) and (b) correspondence in BSL to people whose principal language is BSL.”</i></p> <p>Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Caroline Dineage MP’s response (Conservatives, Gosport):</p> <p><i>“a) The Department is obliged to anticipate the communication needs of any customer who would otherwise be placed at substantial disadvantage and to put in place an alternative format of communication which will meet the customer’s needs. The Department is currently only able to provide general information on GOV.UK regarding its services. We are able to provide services in BSL when requested by our customers.</i></p> <p><i>b) DWP customers who have a specific communication barrier are able to use a variety of communication methods including home visits, phone calls and online services as well as written communications. Once we have established that a customer uses BSL as their principal form of communication with the Department, all future correspondence with that customer will be arranged in this form, without the need for repeated requests. Where necessary the department provides British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters or non-spoken language interpreters, using contracted providers for customers who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired. Video relay service (VRS) is also being trialed through the call centres for Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance and Access to Work, as well as by the Access to Work advisers in the Hearing Loss Team. VRS allows users to make BSL interpreted video calls via their tablet, smartphone, computer or laptop. A professional interpreter then relays the call in English to a member of DWP staff.”</i></p>

Parliamentary terms

Early Day Motion (EDM)

Early Day Motions are formal motions for debate submitted by MPs in the House of Commons. There is usually no time available to actually debate an EDM, but they are useful for drawing attention to specific events or campaigns and demonstrating the extent of parliamentary support for a particular cause or point of view. MPs register their support by signing individual motions.

Oral Parliamentary Question (OPQ) and Written Parliamentary Question (WPQ)

Parliamentary Questions are used by both MPs and Peers to question Ministers in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. They are used to seek information, and Ministers are obliged to explain and defend the work, policy, decisions and actions of their departments, oral questions can also be used to make political points. Parliamentary questions are a vital tool in holding the Government to account. The Prime Minister answers oral questions from the House of Commons every Wednesday at midday.

Debates

Both the House of Commons and the House of Lords hold debates in which Members discuss government policy, proposed new laws and current issues. All debates are recorded in a publication called 'Hansard' which is available online or in print.

All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG)

All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) are informal groups composed of politicians from all political parties. They provide an opportunity for cross-party discussion and co-operation on particular issues. All-party groups sometimes act as useful pressure groups for specific causes helping to keep the Government, the opposition and MPs informed of parliamentary and outside opinion.

Select Committees

House of Commons Select Committees exist to scrutinise the work of government departments. Most committees have about 11 members and reflect the relative size of each party in the Commons. They conduct enquiries on a specific issue, and gather evidence from expert witnesses. Findings are reported to the Commons, printed, and published on the Parliament website. The Government then usually has 60 days to reply to the committee's recommendations.

Written ministerial statements

Government ministers can make written statements to announce:

- The publication of reports by government agencies
- Findings of reviews and inquiries and the government's response
- Financial and statistical information
- Procedure and policy initiatives of government departments

Private Members' Bills

Private Members' Bills allow backbench MPs or Peers to introduce their own legislation. There are three types of Private Members' Bills introduced into the House of Commons:

- **Ballot Bills:** A ballot is held at the beginning of each parliamentary year the 20 MPs whose names come out top are allowed to introduce legislation on a subject of their choice.
- **Ten Minute Rule Bills:** The sponsoring MP is given a slot in which they may make a speech lasting up to 10 minutes in support of his or her bill
- **Presentation Bill:** a Member is not able to speak in support of it and it stands almost no chance of becoming law