



## **PRESS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release

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# **ASSISTED DYING BILL IS A STEP BACK FOR DISABILITY RIGHTS, SAYS RADAR**

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RADAR, the UK's leading pan-disability campaigning organisation, has raised concerns over the revised Assisted Dying Bill presented in the House of Lords today.

Lord Joffe's revised Bill has been amended to remove proposals for the legalisation of voluntary euthanasia, and to enable doctors who oppose helping patients to die to refuse to do so.

RADAR has previously raised concerns over the proposed legislation, urging decision-makers to consider the consequences for disabled people of adopting Assisted Dying.

RADAR's Chief Executive, Kate Nash, said, "Legislation of this sort runs the risk of reinforcing public opinion that disabled people are somehow tragic figures to be pitied. It serves to diminish the value that society places on the lives of disabled people."

While RADAR acknowledges the revisions made to the Bill, introduction of Assisted Dying legislation would be a watershed moment especially given Lord Joffe's stated intention to pursue legalisation of voluntary euthanasia for both young people and those not terminally ill.

RADAR has several key concerns about the Bill with regard to palliative care services and independent living. RADAR believes that the lack of choice currently available to disabled and terminally ill people does not allow individuals to make a truly fair and equal choice about assisted dying.

"Assisted dying legislation will not create autonomy until supported independent living is a real societal value and a reality for disabled people. And that value must be underpinned by provision that is equally available across the whole country." Kate Nash said.

"Before there is a right to die, there must be a right to live as full and equal members of a fair society."

Notes for editors:

<sup>1</sup> RADAR is a national non-governmental disability organisation working for the rights of disabled people, from the broadest range of cultural, racial and social backgrounds, irrespective of their impairment. Although RADAR works with organisations of all types (of and for disabled people) RADAR itself is an organisation of disabled people.

<sup>2</sup> RADAR's vision is about pushing out the boundaries of the expected; a vision of a world where human difference is routinely anticipated, expertly accommodated and positively celebrated.

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