

Government plans threaten to leave thousands without legal representation



LEGAL AID. WHAT PRICE JUSTICE?

The Law Society's 'what price justice?' campaign aims to protect the rights of some of the most vulnerable members of society. We believe that the Government's current plans to change the legal aid system pose a direct threat to thousands of vulnerable people who may not receive the legal help they need.

Our aim is to achieve:

- An adequately funded legal aid system
- Retention of experienced solicitors
- Access to justice for all.

What we want the Government to do

Invest more. Under-investment in legal aid is short-sighted and can result in extra public spending to tackle social problems such as homelessness, children being taken into care and youth crime.

Set a sensible timetable for reform. The Government risks de-stabilising the entire legal aid system if it insists on rushing through ill-thought out changes.

Focus on the areas in most need of reform. We are willing to work with the Government to find ways of reducing areas of rising cost.

Acknowledge the particular risk to minority lawyers and the communities they serve. The Government's current plans pose a direct threat to the viability of legal aid firms run by minority lawyers, denying the particular legal needs of minority communities.

Provide incentives to lawyers to undertake legal aid work. The future of legal aid depends on retaining experienced solicitors and recruiting new legal aid solicitors. The Government must head off the direct threat to access to justice posed by the current decline in legal aid lawyers.

Join our campaign at www.whatpricejustice.lawsociety.org.uk and support our legal aid system.

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