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FAO: LOCAL REPORTERS

Wednesday 3rd May 2017

SOCIAL SECURITY PANELS CAMPAIGN NEARS DEADLINE

SNP MSP CALLS ON LOCAL PEOPLE TO SIGN UP IN FINAL WEEK

SNP MSP for the Kirkcaldy constituency David Torrance, has called on local people to sign up and help shape Scotland's new social security system as a Scottish Government campaign to learn from the experiences of those currently using the service enters its final days.

At least 2,000 people with experience of the current social security system are being recruited to help shape Scotland's new system – allowing the Scottish Government to learn from mistakes made in the past. The panels will work with the expert advisory group on disability and carers' benefits.

David Torrance MSP has said that it marks an important step on the Scottish Government's plans to build a social security system based on dignity and respect.

Commenting, SNP MSP David Torrance said:

"The Scottish Government has been clear that it intends to build a fairer and more respectful social security system once the full powers are devolved over this area – and it is good to see them continue to make good on this promise.

"I hope people across the Kirkcaldy constituency take this final opportunity to sign up to the Scottish Government's panels and play their part in creating a social security system with fairness at its heart before the campaign ends.

"Any government system, be it in education, health, immigration or social security, needs to take fully into account the views and experiences of the people who have used this service at the frontline – and asking 2,000 people with service experience for their views has been a clear example of the Scottish Government doing exactly that.

"We have seen for too long the damage that has been wrought by the callous and ideological system operated by the Tories at Westminster – putting the needs of people last and doing all they can to scapegoat and stigmatise those that need the safety net of welfare.

"The Scottish Government is committed to building a new social security system based on dignity and respect, and contributing to the panels is an important step on the way to achieving this."

ENDS

Notes:

People can register for the panels online: www.gov.scot/socialsecurity

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