



Health and Social Care Levy Bill

House of Commons, September 14, 2021

Speech by James Murray MP (Ealing North) (Lab/Co-op)

We have been absolutely clear that when it comes to funding the NHS and social care, those with the broadest shoulders should pay the most. The idea that this is a “broad-based” tax rise is completely wrong. The hon. Gentleman knows that, we know that and the British public know that. I note that when he got to his feet, he did not answer the question as to whether he thought the FSB, the BCC and the CBI are all wrong. Next time another Conservative Member gets to their feet, I would like to hear their answer to that. I would also like to know whether they think TUC general secretary Frances O’Grady was wrong when she said last week:

“We know social care needs extra funding. But the prime minister is raiding the pockets of low-paid workers, while leaving the wealthy barely touched.”

That is the fundamental unfairness at the heart of this Government’s tax rise.

The Prime Minister and Chancellor are desperate to pretend this is the only way to

raise the money, but that simply is not true. A fairer approach would see funding for the NHS, social care and all our public services borne by those with the broadest shoulders—this would include those with incomes from large financial assets, multiple rental properties, and other income from wealth contributing more. But they have not been considered by this Government, who would prefer to hit workers instead.

This Government are landing a tax rise, which they claim will go toward social care, on low-paid social care workers themselves. The truth is that this is a tax on working people and their jobs. This tax rise tells us nothing about how the Government plan to fix social care, but it tells us everything we need to know about the instincts of the Tories when they are in power. That is why it is wrong. That is why we will be voting against this Bill. And that is why Conservative MPs would do well to join us tonight if, come the next election, they want to be able to look their constituents in the eye.
