



News release from Voice4Change England
20th June 2011

For immediate release

Save the Equality Act

Voice4Change England has sent a joint letter to the Home Secretary asking for urgent assurance that the Equality Act will not be repealed in whole or in part.

The Equality Act is currently the focus of the Government's Red Tape Challenge website. It questions whether the Equality Act 'regulations' should be scrapped, merged, simplified, improved or left as they are. The website states that 'the default presumption will be that burdensome regulations will go'.

Vandna Gohil, Director of Voice4Change England said: "The Equality Act is not regulation. It is an essential piece of primary legislation to support the rights and improve the outcomes of all individuals. The Equality Act is the result of extensive consultation and simplifies previous legislation. It seems extraordinary that the Government would even consider reviewing it.'

Voice4Change England's letter, signed by thirteen leading voluntary and community sector organisations, expresses concern that Government's Red Tape Challenge to equality is not in line with its commitment to equality as set out in the Coalition Programme for Government. It asks for Government to reaffirm this commitment and seeks clarification on the consultation process and timescales.

Kevin Curley, Chief Executive of NAVCA and signatory to the letter said that 'Government are sending mixed messages on their commitment to equality. On the one hand the Minister for Equalities has said the Equality Act is here to stay whilst the Red Tape website asks 'should it be scrapped'. Communities need assurance that Government will support their right to protect themselves against discrimination and to challenge inequality.'

Vandna Gohil added 'From the 5437 comments previously posted on the Red Tape website it is clear that the public strongly support the Act. But we need to make sure that this support is also heard in the new focus on Equalities. We urge everyone that believes in equality for all to join the sector wide campaign to save the Equality Act. Register your support for the Equality Act on the [Red Tape website focus on Equalities](#) even if you have already responded on the general section of the website. For more details on what you can do visit the [Voice4Change England website](#) or read ROTA's [Call to Action](#).'

Ends

Notes to editors:

Save the Equality Act

Voice4Change England is supporting a sector-wide campaign to save the Equality Act. To support the campaign Voice4Change England are promoting the work of our colleagues at ROTA, Equanomics UK and EDF who are leading the campaign. For more information read ROTA's [Call to Action](#) and [EDF's webpages](#).

Signatories to the Voice4Change England letter to the Home Secretary are:

Vandna Gohil, Director, Voice4Change England
Kevin Curley, Chief Executive, NAVCA
David Tyler, Chief Executive, Community Matters
Toby Blume, Chief Executive, Urban Forum
Alison Gelder, Director, Housing Justice
Andy Gregg, Chief Executive, Charities Evaluation Services
Stephen Hammersley, Chief Executive, Community Foundation Network
Sandra Turner, Executive Director, Third Sector European Network
Vivienne Hayes, Chief Executive, Women's Resource Centre
Susanne Rauprich, Chief Executive, The National Council for Voluntary Youth Services
Phil Jew, Head of Policy & Campaigns, AdviceUK
Dr Justin Davis Smith CBE, Chief Executive, Volunteering England
Sir Stuart Etherington, Chief Executive, NCVO
Peter Holbrook, Chief Executive, Social Enterprise Coalition

You can read the full contents of the letter on the [Voice4Change website](#).

The Red Tape Challenge

Government launched the Red Tape Challenge on 7 April to 'free up business and society from the burden of excessive regulation' and states that 'the default presumption will be that burdensome regulations will go'.

The Equality Act was included on the site from the beginning as a General regulation asking whether it should be scrapped, merged, simplified, improved or left as it is. It has received over 5000 responses.

From 9 to 30 June the Equality Act is in the spotlight on the Red Tape website. In addition to the general regulation questions this breaks down the equality act into 8 sections. The Government has said it does not intend to repeal the Equality Act but on all sections about the Equality Act asks 'should we scrap them altogether'.

Visit the [Red Tape Challenge website](#)

About Voice4Change England

Voice4Change England (V4CE) is a national membership organisation that champions the voice of the Black and Minority Ethnic voluntary and community sector. We exist to make a long term positive difference to BME and other disadvantaged communities. We speak up to policymakers to drive more informed and responsive policy making, and provide direct support to BME-led voluntary and community organisations.

For more information please contact

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