# **Media release**

14 May 2024

For immediate release

52 organisations back call for ministers to reverse disability funding cuts

Disabled Persons Assembly NZ (DPA) has released an open letter that calls on ministers Upston and Willis to fully reverse the 18 March disability support restrictions and ensure disabled people have the resources and the flexibility needed to thrive.

The letter is signed by 52 organisations representing disabled people, families, whānau and carers, as well as disability support providers, faith-based organisations, and welfare advocacy groups.

DPA Chief Executive Mojo Mathers says the breadth of support for this call from right across the disability sector should give Ministers Upston and Willis the confidence they need to take decisive action in advance of the Whaikaha independent review findings.

“For too long, much of the support for disabled people has been piecemeal, inequitable, and has not served our community well.

“Now is the time for Government to reverse support and service restrictions that are holding disabled people and our community back.

“With this letter, we ask Government to demonstrate it values disabled people and their families, whānau and carers as key members of our communities in Aotearoa.”

-Ends-

**Link:** [Open letter – Enable disabled people, family and whānau to thrive (PDF)](https://www.dpa.org.nz/store/doc/Open-letter-to-Ministers-re-disability-funding-14-May-2024.pdf)

**For more information contact:**

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### **Quotes from signatories**

**PSA Deaf and Disability Committee**

“What we choose to fund is about what we choose to value. Successive governments have severely underfunded services, equipment, and programs that remove barriers for disabled people to participate fully in our communities and direct our lives.

— **Timothy Keats –** timothy.keats@psa.org.nz

**Complex Care Group**

“Complex Care Group supports families caring for those with intensive health and disability support needs. Government is failing to recognise the intensely demanding caring role performed by families.  There needs to be an increase in investment for the wellbeing of carers and a return of flexibility and choices for respite.”

— **Lisa Martin, Director**complexcaregroup@xtra.co.nz | phone: 027 266 7690

**New Zealand Disability Support Network**

“Unfortunately, we’re experiencing the impact of years of under-investment in disability support. Hundreds of thousands of disabled New Zealanders and their families are feeling uncertain about their future right now - they deserve to be valued and treated fairly, the government needs to step in and sort this mess out.”

— **Peter Reynolds, CEO**
ceo@nzdsn.org.nz | phone: 04 473 4678 | mobile: 027 534 6472

### **About Disabled Persons Assembly NZ**

DPA works to drive systemic change through leadership, advice and advocacy.

We are a not-for-profit, pan-impairment Disabled People’s Organisation (DPO) run by and for disabled people. Currently, more than 90% of our staff identify as disabled.

We have regional, national and international relationships with disabled people and disability organisations, and we are one of the six DPO's that make up the DPO Coalition. Since our formation in 1983, DPA has advocated for systemic change for the equity of disabled people in all areas of life.