

JUSTICE PRESS RELEASE

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Legal aid cuts must be guided by principle

JUSTICE today registered its concern that any cuts to legal aid should be guided by principle in a letter to the Lord Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke QC MP.

In the letter, JUSTICE argues that any cuts should be consistent with the following:

- The obligations of the European Convention on Human Rights;
- The principle of equal justice for all;
- A continuing commitment to address the specific legal problems of the poor;
- The need to look for new sources of funding; and
- The preservation of legal aid funding for judicial review and independence in decision-making on individual cases.

Roger Smith, director of JUSTICE, said:

Without a solid base in principle, cuts may be made to legal aid which devastate the coherence of the justice system. We do not necessarily accept the case for any cuts. But, if they are to be proposed, then measures will be required to protect the position of the weak and the poor. We must not surrender the principle of equal justice for all – whether rich or poor.

For further information, contact Roger Smith on 020 7762 6412 or 07785 781030 or via email to rsmith@justice.org.uk

Note to editors

1. Please find a PDF of the letter attached.

Chairman of Council **Baroness Kennedy of The Shaws QC** *Director* **Roger Smith OBE**
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