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## Government Welfare Overhaul Criticised as Ignoring Wealth Tax

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Image: Milo Chandler

The UK Government's welfare reform plans have drawn sharp criticism from residents and opposition MPs alike, who argue the measures will impose further hardship on vulnerable citizens while bypassing any serious consideration of a wealth tax as an alternative.

For months, constituents in Brighton Pavilion have expressed apprehension over the proposed welfare overhaul, describing a growing sense of anxiety and confusion about how the changes will impact their daily lives. While some of the harshest proposals were removed after sustained public pressure and parliamentary rebellion, the remaining policies

driven by the Treasury's uncompromising fiscal rules are still expected to tighten support for those relying on social security to maintain a decent standard of living.

After a period of tense debate, a scaled-back version of the Welfare Reform Bill ultimately passed through Parliament last week. All four Members of Parliament representing the Green Party maintained their opposition, highlighting the risk of severe consequences for sick, disabled, and younger people. One of the few potentially positive aspects of the legislation was a gradual increase in the Universal Credit benefit was targeted by amendments seeking to deliver the full rise immediately rather than spread over several years. Universal Credit, which consolidates several social security payments into one, has long been criticised for falling short of meeting real living costs.

While Government ministers defended the reforms as necessary steps to restore fiscal discipline and reduce the welfare bill, critics insist these measures sidestep the more equitable solution of a tax on the wealthiest individuals. They argue that a modest wealth tax could fund stronger safety nets without placing the burden on those least able to shoulder it. Nonetheless, the Treasury and the Department for Work and Pensions remain committed to their current approach, signalling little appetite for alternative funding strategies.

According to several MPs who opposed the Bill, including representatives from the Green Party, the Government's approach amounts to disregarding fundamental human rights. They warn that any minor concessions made during debate may ultimately be offset by further cuts elsewhere in the Department's budget, compounding the challenges faced by households already under strain.

As the welfare reforms move closer to implementation, the debate over how to fund social support fairly without undermining basic dignity shows no signs of fading from the political spotlight.

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