

## A positive vote for democracy

Dear Mr Bacon, Mr Bellingham, Mr Freeman, Mr Lamb, Mr Brandon Lewis, Mr Clive Lewis, Mr Simpson, Ms Smith, Ms Truss,

In the next few weeks, parliament will make critical decisions about the future of this country and its relationship with Europe. You will vote on whether to accept the deal negotiated by Theresa May, to accept a no-deal situation or potentially to endorse a further referendum.

As workers in the Norwich Research Park, many of whom are your constituents, we urge you to reject the false choice between the Prime Minister's deal and no deal, and to instead back a People's Vote with an option to remain.

The negotiated deal is much worse than the one we benefit from now. It bears no similarity to any of the false promises made by the leave campaign in the 2016 referendum. It will not return money to the NHS. It will leave us all worse off. It will condemn us to be a rule-taker from Europe without influence. This deal, along with alternatives like joining the EEA, are the opposite of taking back control. For us, in common with many other professions, such a Brexit simply has no advantages, damages our ability to attract talent and reduces our opportunities. Nor will a general election help: any new government would face the same hurdles and is highly unlikely to be able to negotiate anything better.

The alternative of a catastrophic no-deal scenario is even more terrifying. The health secretary cannot rule out deaths from a no-deal Brexit, as the drugs we import from Europe run short. No-deal is not a realistic choice for our great country.

Instead, we urge you to think again about returning the choice to the people, to have a final say. It is democratic to consult the people again when the circumstances have changed so greatly since 2016. We appreciate that supporting a People's Vote may not be an easy option for you. But, if you continue to support the government's course, then we will all suffer the damage. Those who voted to bring on this calamity will be harshly judged.

As thoughtful and respected MPs, your votes will be critical and may influence the votes of other MPs. It is not too late to change course and decisively back a people's vote with an option to remain. We implore you to consider these thoughts and then to vote wisely for the future of the country.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Howard (John Innes Centre)

Nick Talbot (Sainsbury Laboratory)

Neil Hall (Earlham Institute)

All signatories have signed in a personal capacity.

Norwich, 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2018.