Since you have asked people in Northern Ireland their views about whether abortion law should be reformed here, I am now responding as a citizen of that part of the United Kingdom.

- I would urge that the Committee respect that abortion is a matter for devolved government, and albeit the Stormont government here in N Ireland has been suspended for some time, the principle of devolution still holds. As recently as 2016 a clear majority of MLAs voted in favour of our current laws on abortion remaining unchanged and in support of the sanctity of life.

- A couple of interesting statistics are that an estimated 100,000 lives have been saved due to the Abortion Act 1967 not being applied here. I doubt that any of those people alive today would have preferred their mothers to have aborted them. There is a far greater right at stake than the woman’s right to choose, and that is the right to life of the most vulnerable of society, the unborn.

- The other interesting statistic that I would like to mention is that 98% of abortions carried out in Great Britain were carried out for social reasons. That is a shameful statistic, and I have no doubt that should the law on abortion be slackened here we could expect a similar kind of statistic.

For these and many other reasons, I respectfully ask that the Women and Equalities Committee ensure the preservation of the present laws on abortion in Northern Ireland.

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