I live in Northern Ireland and I am strongly in favour of the current laws on abortion here. In particular, I feel that this is a human rights issue, in that the right to life of the unborn child must be protected. One of the signs of a civilised society is the way in which it upholds the rights of the vulnerable and defenceless. There is no-one more vulnerable or defenceless than a baby, especially one still in utero.

In addition, as the father of a child with special needs, I strongly believe that the rights of the disabled are fundamentally undermined by the provision of abortion elsewhere in these islands on the grounds of disability. More than nine out of ten pregnancies involving babies with Down's Syndrome in Great Britain end in abortion, yet I know from my own experience that both a child with Down's and the family of a child so affected can have a happy and fulfilling life. Our society prides itself on championing the rights of the disabled (witness the success of the London Paralympics in 2012), but this is at loggerheads with the way it treats unborn children with disabilities, which in my view is discriminatory.

Relaxing the laws on abortion in NI would be the start of a slippery slope. The overwhelming majority of abortion in GB are carried out on social grounds, not on the grounds of a threat to life, and it is idle to pretend that it would be any different in NI in the event that the law applying in GB were to be extended here.

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