Written submission from Mrs Ann Farmer (ANI0211)

I wish to draw attention to the following important points. Firstly, abortion is a devolved issue that should be dealt with by Northern Ireland politicians, not handed down by Westminster. No member of the Women and Equalities Committee has a seat in Northern Ireland, and of all the Bills attempting to impose abortion on Northern Ireland since 1967 not one has been brought by a Northern Irish MP. The people of Northern Ireland from all communities have shown majorities against abortion, and after nine million abortions since 1967 Great Britain is hardly in a position to lecture Northern Ireland on this subject.

From a human rights perspective, the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights enshrines the right to life from conception; in the aftermath of the Second World War apparently they did not consider the right to kill the innocent as a human right. The Holocaust should act as a warning that once human beings are treated as sub-human or non-human millions will be killed with impunity – as happens here.

However, even the Nazis killed in secret, whereas we demand to be able to do so openly as a human right. In contrast, Northern Ireland’s laws have largely protected innocent lives, especially the weakest who have no voice and no vote, as revealed by research conducted by Both Lives Matter in 2017. If, as abortion advocates allege, these ‘out-dated laws’ make no difference, why seek to change them?

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Sadly some women from Northern Ireland have come to England abortion clinics in the past, and abortion advocates argue that poor women are at a disadvantage because they cannot afford to travel here for abortion. Yes, they are at a disadvantage – they need help to have their babies and provide for them, but no one is offering them that help apart from the pro-life movement, which is demonised for its pains. As in Great Britain legalising abortion in Northern Ireland will facilitate child sexual abuse, as we have seen with the decades-long scandal of paedophile gangs abusing under-age girls, facilitated by the provision of abortions while keeping the parents of the victims in the dark. Abortion is the perfect cover-up for sexual abuse but instead of investigating this appalling scandal the abortion campaign is trying to ensure that Northern Ireland follows our example. Clearly the central figure in this debate – the unborn child – has been airbrushed out of the picture, but this inadvertently demonstrates that if we stop to consider the human right to life of the unborn we cannot justify demanding the right to kill them in Northern Ireland just as we do here. This is typical of those who seek to justify unjustifiable behaviour by proselytising because the very existence of a country or territory that protects the unborn constitutes a challenge to their way of life – or death. In view of all these considerations I would urge that unborn life should be protected by law in Northern Ireland.