I’m writing in a personal capacity regarding the possibility of access to abortion being expanded in Northern Ireland.

Below I have explained why I feel the current regulations on abortion in Northern Ireland are sufficient.

Executive Summary:

- Abortion is already legal in Northern Ireland
- Government should be providing funding for perinatal hospice care and pregnancy help centre services for women in crisis pregnancy
- Unborn babies should have the right to life
- Current abortion law protects both the mother and child

Recommendations for Government:

- Abortion is already legal in Northern Ireland in circumstances where the woman’s life is in danger or the pregnancy poses a serious, permanent or long-term risk to her health and wellbeing. Therefore, there is no need for the government to expand this as it will lead to abortion on demand which causes harm to both the woman and unborn child.
- Stanton Healthcare Belfast is an existing support service for women in crisis pregnancies. Stanton provides support, care and advice for women and I would urge the government to provide funding for this service, which actively helps women and children.
- At 5 weeks in the womb a baby's heart starts beating and so surely is a human that deserves the same rights as others. To increase access to abortion here clearly goes against the right to life of the unborn child.
- In cases of conception through rape, abortion will cause a woman to go through another extremely traumatic experience. The government should provide greater access to counselling for women in these situations.

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