Written submission from Mr Joel Loughridge (ANI0400)

Although the position of the law on abortion in Northern Ireland is unpopular with many in the UK, especially in government and the media, it does reflect the views of many in the province. Though many attempts have been made to amend the law through the democratic processes, most recently in February 2016, they have all failed. Thus it is accurate to say that the current law reflects the will of Northern Irish people.

I think the following statement in the Committee's call for evidence - “the government's international obligations for taking action to reform abortion law in Northern Ireland” - begs the question, in the old and proper sense of begging the question (that is, assuming the answer to the question being asked is true). It remains to be shown that the UK Government has “international obligations to reform abortion law in NI”. The opinion of an unelected committee of the UN does not equal an international obligation. Likewise, the stated views of the majority of Supreme Court judges in the cited case do not constitute an obligation.

In summary, Northern's Ireland's law ought to be respected. Especially when it is responsible for saving many thousands of lives, and protecting the disabled for discrimination.

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