1) DEVOLUTION
The people of Northern Ireland are different from those in other parts of the UK. Until we have representation that we have voted for and that reflects our wishes on this there should be no change. It is not democratic to be denied a say. We should not be told by people in other parts of the UK how we should think or deal with big issues. The life of the unborn child is one of these.

2) DISTINCTIVE LAW AND CULTURE
Those who have disabilities have much to teach us and as much right to life. I am proud that the law here in Northern Ireland protects life. The law stops discrimination against the lives of babies who have disability.

3) HUMAN RIGHTS & EQUALITY
The unborn can't have a say in this, a child does not talk until the age of 1, and be able to have a coherent conversation until the age of 3. Someone needs to stand up for their rights until they are able to communicate their own point of view. The unborn child who has been conceived in love, are they fundamentally any different than the unborn child who is unloved? Is that what this is about, love? Do we really want to say those who are unloved have no rights? There are tragic cases where women have been the victims of crime, but does healing come from more violence, violence against an innocent baby who has no opportunity to state their case, or their innocence in the crime?

4) PERSONAL STORIES
I have friends who have a lovely little boy, now 6 years old, who happens to have an extra chromosome. He is in mainstream school doing fantastically and what is more he brings lots of joy to those in his family and his community around him. Downs Syndrome doesn't make him any less, in fact in some ways it makes him more to more people.

Also, my friends had a little baby who was diagnosed in the womb as having Edwards Syndrome. They were unsure then how long they and their other two children would have with her after she was born. They got to have a couple of months with their beautiful baby girl. They got to love her and their children now have beautiful memories of the time they had with her. A beautiful baby who was only able to be with them for a short time. Is it profoundly sad that they didn't have longer with her? Yes. But they had that time. Special memories were made.

My wife and I had a miscarriage of a baby at six weeks gestation, that baby would have most likely had a heart beat, it was living. And I will always think about that baby I never knew and wonder what life would have been like with them around. Those questions linger.

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