1) DEVOLUTION
For Westminster to change the abortion laws in Northern Ireland would be to interfere in a devolved issue, to ignore the wishes of the people of Northern Ireland, and set a worry precedent for other devolved issues.

2) DISTINCTIVE LAW AND CULTURE
The abortion laws in Northern Ireland are important for saving the lives of the pre-born child (approximately 100,000 so far, research suggests), and by preventing abortion on the basis of disability, are vital for creating an inclusive society.

3) HUMAN RIGHTS & EQUALITY
In practice, less than 2% of abortions in England and Wales were granted on the grounds of life limiting conditions and sexual crime. It is vital that any free society uphold the right to life of all people: born or pre-born, disabled or not, with a terminal condition or not.

4) PERSONAL STORIES
My son was born three months prematurely this year, and we spent seven months in hospital with him. During that time we’ve been witness to many amazing things: a baby who’s waters broke at 19 weeks and the doctors gave him no chance of survival, but who is alive and home today with his family, a baby who survived a brain disease which previously there had only been two known survivors of worldwide, a baby whose parents were told was inviable at their 20 week scan, but is alive today. With our own son, we have been told repeatedly by doctors to prepare ourselves, he’s not going to survive (we were offered palliative care in August) and yet he’s still alive today. My heart goes out to any woman who has been told that her baby is not going to live. I personally know how awful and indescribable a grief that is, and you think “this shouldn’t be happening, I can’t bear this, there must be a way to stop this.” But tragically, when you are told your baby (whether in the womb or not) is going to die, there’s no way to fix this, there’s no way to stop this happening to you. You are a mother, and your child is going to die, and an abortion is not going to remove that horrible grief, merely compound it.

December 2018