



## The Burning Bush - Online article archive

### DUP proposes to change NI abortion law

The news of the attempt by the DUP to roll back the abortion law that was imposed upon us here in Northern Ireland by Westminster MPs in 2019 is to be welcomed.

I would, however, that it was an attempt to ban abortion altogether. As it is, 'fatal fetal abnormalities' are to be exempt from this proposed new law.

Of course, it is a fallible human being who declares that a woman is carrying a child with 'fatal fetal abnormalities'!

Doctors may and have got the matter wrong and babies that did not suffer 'fatal fetal abnormalities' have been aborted.

Better it would be surely if the child was carried to termination and born naturally, as long as the life of the mother was not threatened, and then the duration of the little one's life be decided by the Lord, 'the Giver of life'.

Job rightly said: "The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD," Job 1:21.

There are two 'laws' in conflict here.

There is the law of a doctor's fallible diagnosis and the infallible Law of God, which every man who breaches it will give an account of one day.

"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God," Romans 1:12.

All involved in the process of abortion, medics and expectant mothers. should ever bear this in mind.

God's Law states: "Thou shalt not kill," Exodus 20:13. This is the sixth commandment and the first of those laws governing our duty toward our fellow man.

Abortion is 'MURDER', and that is what is forbidden in the sixth commandment.

That fact is reason enough for abortion to be banned.

Millions of children have been murdered in this fashion since the dawn of time. In this so-called 'enlightened age' the slaughter continues to a greater degree than ever before.

The blood of the innocent is upon every corner of our nation and the nations of the earth.

That will not go unpunished.

While I wish good success to this effort I add my disappointment that it does not go as far as the Law of God would demand.

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### Northern Ireland abortion law changes proposed by the DUP

**BBC news story.** By Jayne McCormack, BBC News NI Political Reporter, 16th February 2021.

See also **Newsletter report.**

The DUP has proposed a new law to prevent abortions being carried out in NI in cases of non-fatal disabilities.



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NI's abortion laws changed significantly last year following legislation passed at Westminster.

There is no time limit for terminations when there is a "substantial risk" a fetus would suffer a severe mental or physical impairment, such as Down's syndrome.

A private member's bill brought by Paul Givan is seeking to overturn this.

Mr Givan's bill represents the first legislative attempt since devolution was restored in Northern Ireland to amend the abortion laws introduced by the UK government.

He said the legislation would not seek to amend the law for abortions in cases of fatal fetal abnormalities.

The move is being backed by disability rights campaign group Don't Screen Us Out, which claims the law is discriminatory and will allow abortions without time limit for conditions such as Down's syndrome or cleft palate.

One high-profile activist involved in the campaign is Heidi Crowter, who has Down's syndrome.

She is also taking a separate legal action against the UK government regarding a similar element in the 1967 Abortion Act, which applies in Great Britain.

In the Republic of Ireland, abortions are allowed in cases of fatal foetal abnormality, but this does not apply for conditions such as Down's syndrome.

Mr Givan, the assembly member behind the bill, said it was about removing discrimination against people with disabilities.

"This is an opportunity for people to come together and fight a prejudicial, discriminatory piece of legislation," he told the Good Morning Ulster programme.

"We have introduced laws called the Disability Act of 1995 and we have built upon that to place duties on public authorities and support people with disabilities.

"I believe that those rights - and these are human rights - ought to be conferred upon people before they are born and that is what this campaign is going to be about.

"I believe there is a majority of assembly members that agree with this, as does the majority of the public."

However, Paula Bradshaw of the Alliance Party, said checks and balances were already in place.

"If he [Mr Givan] thinks these terminations are taken lightly by a woman who has received such a devastating diagnosis, or a healthcare professional who has devoted their whole life to healthcare and supporting women, it is horrendously disrespectful," she said.

"I'm not pro-abortion, I'm pro-choice.

"A woman has to be supported when she's presented with this diagnosis to explore all options for managing the rest of her pregnancy."

How did we get here?

In July 2019, MPs voted to decriminalise abortion in Northern Ireland and create new laws.

Stormont was not functioning due to a row between the main power-sharing parties.

A new framework for abortion services in NI was then drawn up by the Northern Ireland Office and took effect last March.



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It made terminations legal in all circumstances within the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.

Timeline: The key moments in how the abortion law changed in NI

A 24-week limit would apply in situations where continuing a pregnancy would involve risk of injury to the woman's physical or mental health.

But there is no term limit in cases of fatal fetal abnormality where there is a substantial risk that the fetus would die or, if born, would suffer a severe mental or physical impairment.

Last year, the Stormont assembly supported a non-binding motion rejecting the laws.