

From: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee](#)
Subject: Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018
Date: Thursday, 30 August 2018 3:35:20 PM

Dear Committee Members,

I would like to submit the following points for your consideration in relation to the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018:

1. The Explanatory Notes to the Bill point out that the current state of the law has created uncertainty among medical professionals as there is no definition of “unlawful” in ss224, 225 and 226 of the Criminal Code. However, s6 of the Bill states that a medical practitioner can perform a termination on a woman who is more than 22 weeks pregnant if they consider that the termination should be performed considering all circumstances. This equally creates much uncertainty for medical practitioners due to the wide range of issues that can be considered. Whilst the uncertainty relating to criminal prosecution has been removed, there does not seem to be any redress against a practitioner who performs a termination even if there are no reasonable grounds upon which to do so.
2. The Notes suggest a need to modernise the law relating to abortions. However, there are many provisions in the Criminal Code that have been around for a long time – homicide, rape, burglary, to name a few – and it would be nonsensical to suggest that these provisions should be changed just to “modernise the law”. There are some timeless values and standards, in my opinion, that our society does, and should uphold. Abortion is killing an unborn child – and the Bill provides that this can basically be done for any reason – surely we need to defend the rights of unborn children and not provide the means whereby they can randomly be killed. It seems quite absurd to suggest that a baby could be aborted say a few days prior to birth without recrimination, whereas killing a child once they are born becomes a criminal offence. Is that not rather an artificial line to draw?
3. The Explanatory Notes outline much in relation to “patient autonomy”, “recognition of reproductive rights”, “women’s rights”, “women’s rights to choose”, etc, but don’t make any defence whatsoever of the child’s right to live. There is no mention of the vulnerable child, who is absolutely defenceless. I simply cannot believe that our society would be prepared to kill as a price it is willing to pay for these “rights”. There is more than the woman to think about – it is not just about her body, her rights – it is about the right of an alive but unborn child to live. I completely understand that there are women in desperate circumstances, but I believe that they can (and indeed should) be helped by the many other means that are available to them, but we shouldn’t resort to killing an unborn child as a best alternative.
4. I would also be gravely concerned on the psychological effect on women who have had an abortion. Again, the Notes speak of health issues for women who want an abortion, yet make no reference to the psychological ill-effects resulting from having had one. There are many testimonies of the damage done to the mental health of women due to having terminated a pregnancy of a healthy baby.

Surely this is also a health issue for women that needs to be addressed?

5. There does not seem to be any suggestion whatsoever of the provision of services for women so that they can properly consider whether to have an abortion – there is no requirement for any counselling; for consideration of alternatives; or for help for them in any way other than to enable them to have an abortion. On the contrary, the proposal in relation to safe access zones means that a woman considering an abortion would actually be deprived of the opportunity to get support from others who may be able to provide a very acceptable alternative. This is not a balanced approach to the issue in any way, and is just encouragement for abortions. I find it incredible that someone who is in a safe access zone and who can suggest an alternative to abortions, or offer help to a woman wanting an abortion, could be imprisoned; whereas there is no penalty to someone who kills a healthy but unborn child right up to the time of birth.

6. There are obviously many commercial interests that stand to gain by legislation permitting abortions, and therefore would not provide balanced support for a woman who might be considering one. To provide a more balanced approach, I believe that any Bill should provide that abortions should not be performed in private clinics.

I am empathetic with the situation that some women find themselves in and I believe that they should be given care, counselling and help. However, I do not believe that this can in any way justify killing an unborn child. An unborn child is not just a commodity to be disposed of because of spurious reasons. Surely our society is better than that.

Thank you for your consideration of my submission.

I would request that my name, as well as contact particulars, would not be published.

Many thanks.

Yours sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.