

Health (Abortion Law Reform)  
Amendment Bill 2016

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To whom it may concern.

I am emailing in regards to the above bill, the contents of which I have read on the website.

Regardless of one's personal views on it, we would all agree that abortion is a serious issue. The above bill seeks to render it no more of an issue than any other inane surgical procedure such as a tooth extraction or hip replacement. Women undergoing abortions are in a variety of situations, not all of which are of their own desire, such as pressure from partner or relatives.

Of particular concern is the proposed "safe zone" around the clinics, which seek only to remove those who are offering the women a last minute chance to change their minds. There are countless stories of women who are thankful for them having been there. I invite you to watch this short video by the Good Counsel Network in the UK, who have been providing such practical help for many years.

The news media of course give no airtime to such footage, instead choosing to portray the pro life stance as extreme or bigoted. I urge you to exercise your professional judgement to see through these lies and consider the situation in an unbiased way. A very difficult task in today's climate I will admit.

Another concern is the alteration of the conscientious objection for health professionals. While the bill does appear to preserve it, it does require every individual to actively facilitate alternative means to procure abortion, which is completely farcical. How can you grant someone a right to opt out while still expecting them to play an active role in facilitating the procedure they object to? If working in an abortion clinic I agree they probably should

find alternative employment, but in mainstream medicine we are there to provide health and healing to our patients, not death, and we have a right to practice the skills we trained in without the burden of a troubled conscience. I have no objection to the clause about cases where the mother's life is in immediate danger, but that has never been debated even before abortion was legalised in the 1970s, nor by any pro life person today.

It's important to remember why abortion was a criminal offence in the first place. The reality of what it is has not changed. Neither should the level of regulation to ensure that it is carried out only after very serious discernment. I'll be honest with you and say I believe abortion is never the right answer, but some regulation is better than none and the current proposals are way too extreme.

Kind regards

Marc Grimer