

# **Random Sample of Submissions Received on the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution**

A submissions process was open to the public from the 14 October 2016 to 16 December 2016.

The Assembly received in excess of 13, 500 submissions, online and by post.

To assist members in digesting the submissions, the secretariat has compiled a random sample of 300 submissions. A note on the methodology is provided below.

This random sample produced 185 online submissions and 115 postal submissions and these are presented in that order below.

These submissions will be discussed by the Members at the Assembly meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> February.

Members should ideally read each of these submissions in advance of the meeting. However, if this is not possible you are asked to dip in and out of the document, to read from both the online and postal submissions.

## **Random Sample Selection Methodology**

- Each individual submission was given a unique alpha numeric identifier. This allowed each record to be individually identified and retrieved once the random selection had taken place.
- No categorisation or filtering was done in advance
- A formula was applied using a random number generator in excel and a sample of 300 submissions was selected.
- It is noted that this sample may include some level of duplication, due to the large number of campaign or repeat submissions received. However in order to be as transparent as possible the sample, once selected, was not altered in any way.
- The 300 randomly selected submissions was then compiled into a single document, grouped according to how they were received (all electronic submissions together, all postal submissions together).

**Brian Mulhern 26/11/2016 22:29:56**

Please retain the eight amendment of the constitution.

**Libby Lynch 27/11/2016 14:10:01**

**All human rights lack credibility if we have none when we are at our most vulnerable.**

Taking the life of another human being has been described as a "reproductive choice", a "woman's right" and even a "human right".

If we lack the right to life, all human rights are meaningless.

**Liam MacCraith Pro Life Campaign 27/11/2016 14:25:25**

I wish to state that as a citizen of Ireland I am deeply opposed to any change being made to the Eight Amendment which protects the right to life of unborn babies constitutionally. The shedding of innocent blood that so called restrictive abortion has led to in so many countries is no different to the Holocaust at the hands of Hitler. The practice of abortion is murder premeditated. Do not let this heinous crime into our precious land. Life is not ours to take. Liam MacCraith, Tinnaranny, Co.Kilkenny

**Patricia Diamond Cleeve 27/11/2016 18:47:45**

Our constitution protects life at all its stages, pre-birth, post birth and into old age. This is a mark of the country that we are that we protect the voiceless, the handicapped, the infirm with equal love and protection. Melissa Ohden was aborted between 18 to 22 weeks in Iowa, USA. She was rescued by a nurse and adopted. She was 2 lbs in weight at birth. She became a social worker, a wife and mother and a contributing member of society. Even at 18 to 22 weeks life is sustainable and valuable. Please do not amend our constitution. Let's care for mother's who feel in need of abortion, along with their precious babies. Let's support these mothers in every way by offering every kind of care, support, help and protection.

**Bebhinn Farrell Private citizen 17/10/2016 11:44:55**

I think it's extremely important that the assembly is presented with the scientific findings around abortion in Ireland, findings reflective of decades of study from the World Health Organisation, on the psychological impact of criminalising abortion, and forced travel for abortion. My psychology thesis through UCD thoroughly presents this.

**Philip Duggan 28/11/2016 14:59:37**

Every person has an inalienable right to life from conception to natural death. My body my choice in my view in its full interpretation Justifies suicide in all its devastating consequences. It means one can do what you like with your body. In the heinous crime of rape The baby is the only person to lose its life in abortion. In the equal right to life The mother is entitled to all treatment to save her life Even this results in baby's death

unintentionally. I understand that instigator in ROWE V WADE in US. IS SEEKING to reverse the judgment.

**Karen Songhurst 28/11/2016 23:05:32**

I believe that women have the right to choose what is best for them and their bodies. When an unborn child had no chance of survival inside you it is cruel to make you wait to birth a child who cannot survive. The alternative is to travel to the UK and suffer this torment without the support of family and friends. For me it's a simple decision. Do the right thing Repeal the 8th

**Maria n/a 29/11/2016 16:57:36**

Human life is sacred from the first moment of Conception to natural death. So please do everything you can to protect Article 40 3 3 of the Constitution.

Thank you.

**Susan Babcock-Coleman 30/11/2016 03:37:35**

r Members of the Citizens' Assembly

Submission to argue against the abolition of the 8th Amendment.

Since the foundation of the State, the Republic and our citizens has chosen to accept and respect that fundamental human rights apply to all human beings, regardless of status, race, creed, gender, ability, stage of development, environment or state of dependency.

The first five categories mentioned above are self-explanatory, however, the last three categories are not often quoted, please allow me to explain briefly:

1. Stage of development: Human beings' fundamental right to life exists as much for a newborn (early stage of development) as for a 35year old mature adult. The same applies for a fetus in very early stage of development.
2. Environment: Human beings' fundamental rights applies as much to members of an undiscovered tribe in the Amazon jungle as for someone living in a penthouse apartment in Dublin 2. The same applies to human beings in the environment of their mothers' womb.
3. Dependency: Whether a bed-ridden individual dependent on caring relatives, a breastfed baby dependent on mother's milk or a fetus fully dependent on mother's womb, all human rights apply equally to each individual person.

The fundamental question, the one question that truly matters, the REAL question that you as a member or the Citizen's Assembly are called on to decide is:

WHAT IS THE UNBORN?

Scientists (embryologists, obstetricians), philosophers and Christian theologians are all in agreement: Human life begins at conception. That is the action that creates a specific individual - directing his/her own development, owning his/her own unique DNA sequences - the unique and continuous individual that we all once were, presently is, and continues to be somewhere along the continuum of human life from unborn stage to eventual death. Clearly unborn babies are humans and clearly, fundamental human rights, including the right to life, applies to the unborn as much as to you and me.

Please use your influence to protect the unborn by retaining the 8th Amendment.

Sincerely yours,

Name \_\_Mrs Susan E. Babcock-Coleman\_\_\_\_\_ Date 30 November 2016

**Niamh O'Connor 30/11/2016 00:10:51**

To ensure my rights to healthcare as a woman, please ensure a speedy referendum to repeal the 8th

**Andrew Compton 30/11/2016 23:30:13**

The Irish state chose to accept and respect that fundamental human rights apply to ALL human beings, regardless of status, race, creed, gender, ability, stage of development, environment or state of dependency.

The last three categories above are not often quoted. Each of these categories include the status of the unborn.

The key question for the Citizen's Assembly is, 'What is the unborn?'

Scientists, philosophers, theologians and some members of the entertainment industry (Jack Nicholson and Sally Philips for example) are all in agreement. Human life begins at conception. Clearly, unborn babies are humans. To uphold the view that the unborn are sub-human leads a society to justify murder based on the same perverted principal used by the Nazis to murder 6-7 million people.

The unborn have the same right to life that we have. Ireland has the possibility of affirming total human rights through the 8th Amendment with an added resolve to love and cherish both parties affected by unwanted pregnancies, unhealthy unborns' and difficult procedures.

**Bernadette Goggins 01/12/2016 03:26:25**

As many struggle with what is right in this area I believe we should as ourselves a couple of questions:

1. When does human life begin?

2. Has a fetus the potential to become anything other than a human being?
3. As a society how do we take care of the most vulnerable among us?
4. What gives any of us the right to end anyone's life regardless of what stage of life they are at?

We are all faced with difficult and painful situations in our lives. Those who find themselves unexpectedly pregnant or who find out that their baby has a serious maybe life threatening disability or who develop a serious medical condition while pregnant need much support and care but if you believe life begins at conception, if you agree that a fetus only has the potential to become human, if you agree that we must protect the most vulnerable among us then ending a life through abortion is not a choice that any of us have the right to make

**Mary O'Brien N/A 01/12/2016 12:10:44**

I write as a concerned citizen. I do not represent any group or organization.

**caroline mc quaid 01/12/2016 12:19:18**

repeal the 8th

**Tony Burke 02/12/2016 14:31:43**

My submission is very brief.

As you consider this issue, please ask yourself this question:

Is it ever right to kill an innocent human life?

Thank you.

**Elizabeth O'Rafferty 02/12/2016 16:48:08**

We need to repeal the 8th amendment because we need to show that Ireland we take women's reproductive health seriously. We need to show that Ireland believes women should have equality with men, rather than keeping them as second-class citizens. We need to show that we believe it's wrong for a religion to dictate what women who may, or may not, adhere to that religion can do. We need to show that we trust women to make decisions for themselves. We need to show the world that Ireland respects women, listens to their needs, and doesn't dictate their human rights to them. We need to repeal the 8th amendment.

**Lorna Catriona O Donnell 04/12/2016 19:42:13**

I am proud to be Irish, but I am ashamed that in our beautiful country women are still not given full body autonomy. As citizens of this great island we deserve to have the right to choose what happens to our bodies.

**Deirdre Stokes 05/12/2016 18:32:15**

Having recently had a baby myself I was acutely aware during my pregnancy that, should there be any medical decisions to be taken, I would not have the constitutional right to take them if my care provider decided there was a danger to the baby. As an adult woman I think it is unacceptable that my healthcare choices are dictated by a constitutional provision. Maternity services in Ireland are overstretched and under resourced as it is - please give women our autonomy and allow us to make our own decisions with advice from our caregivers. No woman should be at risk from legal uncertainty.

**Aoife Ni Mhóráin 06/12/2016 21:46:22**

It time to modernise and give women the right to choose.

**Taryn Trainor (Unite Trade Union) Unite Trade union 08/12/2016 10:31:08**

Please find attached submission from unite trade Union<sup>1</sup>

**John Clancy . Concerned VCitizen 08/12/2016 20:14:01**

The State acknowledges the right to life of the unborn and, with due regard to the equal right to life of the mother, guarantees in its laws to respect, and, as far as practicable, by its laws to defend and vindicate that right.

There are very few laws that we can say with certainty save lives but the Eight Amendment is one such law. On hundred thousand people are alive in Ireland today thanks to the Eight Amendment. We should be immensely proud of this fact. The unborn child cannot be written off as just a "clump of cells". We need to acknowledge this and recognise the fact that that this tiny human being needs to be protected by our laws just like every other member of Irish society. Ireland has an excellent record in caring for women in pregnancy. Our medical profession still ranks as a world leader in terms of safeguarding the lives of women.

Instead of introducing abortion we should focus on positive alternatives like adoption. Abortion is not an appropriate response to babies who are seriously or terminally ill. Families who receive a difficult diagnosis need support and access to the best perinatal care. Instead of letting families feel that abortion is their only option when they hear their baby is sick, the very best care should be made available for these vulnerable babies who may only live for a very short time after birth.

Once abortion is introduced, it becomes impossible to restrict and tnhis is clear when we look at other countries.

**Declan Clarke 09/12/2016 13:10:47**


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<sup>1</sup> This can be found in annex.

I personally believe that all citizens of Ireland should be treated wholly equally. I see the denial of full access to abortion through the 8th Amendment as a breach of the fundamental human rights of the female population. Like many others, I call for a total repeal of the 8th Amendment, its total removal from the Constitution, a full decriminalisation of abortion in Ireland, and a transparent legal framework that allows citizens who choose to seek an abortion the ability to do so in their own country without fear of judgement or reprisals.

**J O'Keeffe 09/12/2016 13:40:51**

Please give us freedom to choose in Ireland

**Deborah Behan 09/12/2016 18:46:43**

Twenty years ago I fell pregnant with an unplanned pregnancy. The father assured me it was my problem alone. I was extremely scared and uncertain about what to do. I went to several "crisis pregnancy advice" agencies which all turned out to be catholic and scolded me for getting pregnant and then wanting to know my options. I cannot tell you the grief and guilt this put on me at an already stressful time. I was going into my second year of college and I knew my parents would be devastated. Confused I allowed my friends to help me book an abortion clinic in England. I was still very conflicted. As the day approached I was extremely distraught and was soul searching. I came to the conclusion I did not want to abort and cancelled the appointment. I think if I had gone I maybe would have felt obliged to have the procedure. I hope that in the future women will be able to calmly discuss their options and make this decision in their own country supported as much as possible. My daughter is 20 and I would support her and all women's right to choose.

**Ailsa McGuinness 09/12/2016 23:45:33**

If women are going abroad to get abortions, why not provide for our own citizens in their country and help them while they're going through what is not a pleasant experience. No woman wants an abortion, however for various reasons a pregnancy should not be carried full term. For cases where is a danger to the mother's life, I find it unbelievable that the life of the foetus is valued the same as the life of the mother.

**Saoirse Ni Scanlain 10/12/2016 14:02:06**

Submission for positive consideration and work towards the removal of the 8th amendment from Irish Constitution, in a move towards a more contemporary and fairer Ireland.

**Madi O'Carroll Personal 10/12/2016 15:25:29**

The current constitution's definition of life is inconsiderate and blind. A biological determination of the unborn's right to life more important than the human who carries the unborn is unacceptable in our society today. This definition of life is limiting, obscure and dismissive of the countless real life women who suffer financially, psychologically and physically because of the Eighth Amendment. I support the repealing of the eighth

ammendment and urge the Citizens Assembly to do right by the overwhelming majority's needs; make abortion accessible.

**Fintan Burns Firefighter.. NIFRS 10/12/2016 17:45:34**

If we truly reflect and hence realise that we were once that developing baby in our mother's womb, that nobody is born perfect because perfection in human form cannot be quantified, and that length of life be it 5 minutes or 5years is still a lifetime for that baby then we should be able to appreciate the protection that the eighth amendment gives to the developing baby in the womb.

Equal right to life for mother and baby is the ultimate human right and the travesty is that this amendment is being debated at all.

Imperfection so called brings out the best in humanity, Aborting because of probable terminal disabilities means that existing disabled people are leading a less fulfilled life and in such a society may very well lead to marginalisation of the disabled and ultimately eugenics. Who are we to judge?

We as a nation should celebrate the eighth as a compassionate yet obvious and logical piece of legislation.

Let's work to improve peri natal and palliative care for little terminally ill babies and their families.

Ireland has a proud record of safe maternal care and indeed this amendment should be celebrated for saving thousands of lives when compared with other countries who legalised abortion for misguided health reasons but now abort liberally for cases of downs syndrome and even cleft pallet

This amendment protects mothers during pregnancy in that her life is rightfully seen as 'equal' to the rights of the child. However the amount of incidences where a baby must be aborted to save the life of the mother during childbirth is extremely rare( I don't have that data submission to hand)

Please cherish this piece of life saving legislation

**Gillian Butler N.a 28/10/2016 12:46:24**

Hi,

I agree with abortion for people who are abused and wish to terminate. And in emergency cases where several doctors agree. I dont agree with on demand abortion where people can just decide that they want to terminate as it doesn't suit them. A fetus has a heartbeat from 6 weeks. Anything too far into pregnancy is wrong. It would be a sad country if we didn't have any respect for the baby. We need better sex and health education. I only learned



properly about my own health when I was trying for a baby. Lots of pregnancies could be avoided. Help avoid pregnancies rather than just get rid of them.

Thanks, Gillian

**Nicola Mc Fadden Donegal Pro Life 12/12/2016 09:26:55**

I wish to retain the 8th Amendment for all the reasons outlined on this leaflet

**Patrick J Morrissey 12/12/2016 10:18:03**

I would ask you to continue the support of our 8th. amendment simply so that a person who has been conceived can fulfill the life given to them by nature.

I believe that a person once conceived has the right to be born and given the opportunity to life and happiness.

I also believe that this provision gives clear guidance to our medical profession on how they should treat all people involved in a pregnancy.

As a father and grandfather I ask you to continue to allow life to be protected.

I believe this provision protects both the mother and the child and protects them both from pressure and gives our medical profession clear guidance in performing their duties.

Consider both in any pregnancy

**Anthony Brennan 12/12/2016 16:09:14**

Please read the attached file.<sup>2</sup>

**Majella Counihan 12/12/2016 21:10:58**

What is the difference between empathy and compassion? Empathy is understanding how someone feels and trying to imagine how that might feel for you. It's a mode of relating. Compassion takes it further. It is feeling what a person is feeling, holding it, accepting it and taking some kind of action.

My sister in law Dolores is Down syndrome and is such a special person, gentle, kind, sensitive...we could go on and on. She is the central piece of the whole family. When she smiles your heart melts. When she hugs her hug is so gentle as she would be afraid that she would hurt if she gave you a big squeeze. And yet people are trying to kill people like her in the womb. It is HORRIFIC! Her name is so appropriate. Dolores are tears. It makes many of us weep when we cannot understand why women (and men) are advocating for abortion for children with various diseases and disabilities in order to 'spare them a life if suffering'. To me, it suggests that one must be perfect in mind and body in order to have a fulfilling life, which sends a message to those living with disabilities outside the womb that our govt. our

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<sup>2</sup> This can be found in annex.

health minister and all pro choice people do not think these lives are worth living. BELIEVE me, our suffering will be the day we lose Dolores from this life.

We should not even be thinking or discussing this amendment. Abortion should be unthinkable. People have wavered words distorting the meaning of protecting the unborn in the womb. It is portrayed as waging a war on women. This is so far from the truth. To me it seems so so foolish or has the human race let themselves be so brainwashed. And there is only one race for us all in this world and that is the human race! Please let us finish this race once and for all and come first and protect life from conception to natural death. Have our hearts gone that cold that one can convince themselves and argue that ending the life of a child is a loving act? If the 8th amendment is taken out of our Constitution it will be that:- "Before birth it will be legal to kill a child but after birth it will be illegal to kill him or her" Have we lost the run of ourselves completely? To me abortion is an insult to women. Our bodies are designed to procreate, to carry another human being within us. Could we just stop for one moment and think compassionately about this. It is so so special. Did we ever think that if our mothers chose abortion we would not be here, claiming rights to our bodies. How blessed we are that they

carried on in good times and bad, whatever the situation and accepted that the body (us) within their bodies had his or her own right I.e. To be born and live.

Only recently we saw the graduation in Galway of a group of actors with intellectual disabilities In performing arts. How beautiful, how awesome. Each and every being on this earth is given a specific talent.

To conclude, when we lie in our own death bed let us ask ourselves did we have compassion to defend the special 8th amendment?

**Dimitry Avtin Diamond Artist 13/12/2016 00:13:42**

my heart is deeply concerned about current situation in our society toward to protection of life unborn children and pregnant women

**Jessica Dalton 13/12/2016 00:49:03**

It is my opinion that everyone has the right to life. It is also our duty and responsibility as adults to protect anyone who can not protect themselves. Those in need of that protection more than anyone at the moment is the unborn child, who is in danger from the Irish government. If we allow the killing of unborn children then what does that say about us as a nation?

Who gave anyone the right to decide whether or not to destroy an innocent life?

As adults we have a choice in many aspects of our lives. To alter the eighth amendment to allow citizens of Ireland to kill unborn children is not only horrific and shocking, but the fact

that people are looking to use the excuse of their OWN health and well being is monstrous, selfish and inhumane.

Everyone has the right to life. Unborn babies need us to stand up for them and to inform others that no matter the circumstances surrounding their conception they are innocent. No matter what the medical circumstances that concern either the unborn child or mother, the unborn child is innocent and should not be killed. No matter what mental state the mother is in, the unborn baby is innocent and should not be punished by being killed.

Babies are born premature as early as twenty one weeks and live healthy , long lives. How can we condone the killing of a baby at any stage of the mothers pregnancy?

How can we ask the Irish nurses and doctors who would have to operate on the pregnant mothers, to cut out a baby, a baby who has a beating heart, fingers, toes, eye lashes? How can we allow this to happen to the unborn baby? To medical staff? To the mothers themselves?

We can stop this and allow all babies to have a fighting chance at life, whether they are born healthy or not, or whether or not they are born with a disability. All children should be loved and protected.

Please do not let our country bring in a law that will allow the killing of innocent unborn babies.

My own niece was born when her mother was only 23 weeks pregnant with her. She weighed the same as a small bag of sugar. My niece is now eleven years old, five foot five and full of life and love.

We need to support mothers and their babies. We need to give them other options, options that are far less traumatic for the mothers than killing their unborn babies.

Whose life is more important? You can't choose. Both the mother and the babies life are equally important. We need an option that saves every life not one that chooses to purposefully end a life.

Please think about everyone in the situation before you decide to allow abortion into our country.

Jessica Dalton, Buncrana, Co. Donegal, Ireland.

**Sean Leen N/A 13/12/2016 01:07:45**

I believe that murder is wrong. This is the fifth commandment 'Thou shalt not kill'. I believe that all life is sacred, from the moment of conception, when biologically a new human being has formed. This human being is the most vulnerable form of human life. As responsible

human beings, we must do everything in our power to protect all human life, especially at its most vulnerable stages, whether early on or later on.

I have been strongly influenced in my life by the errors of the Nazi regime in Germany in the Second World War. I have often asked myself if I would have been strong enough to resist the murder, abuse and inhuman suffering imposed on Jewish and other vulnerable human beings.

The numbers of abortions per annum in the world are astounding. Worldwide, this year, there have been more than 38 million; since 1980, worldwide, there have been more than 1.3 billion - more than the population of India. This is a new holocaust. Even if one does not accept that the unborn child is a human being, imagine for a moment that one is wrong - then, isn't this truly a holocaust of unimaginable proportions. Surely, no 'human right' is worth this level of destruction of an individual human life-form, which must have some rights.

Of course it makes sense that in a mother or child situation, the mother's life must be prioritised. My wife is a medical doctor, a paediatrician. I know that doctors always do this. The practice is simply that the child is delivered prematurely (which often happens anyway, even if the mother's life is not under threat) and if the child fails to survive, despite the best efforts of doctors (who have sworn an oath, and who are obligated professionally, to protect all life, not just the less vulnerable, the privileged, the born, the ones who can speak out for themselves), then nature has taken its course - this is similar to a miscarriage or still-birth, whoc unfortunately are still quite common and very upsetting for would-be parents.

People argue that in cases of rape or so-called fatal foetal abnormality, then the would-be mother has the right to abort her unborn child. But two wrongs don't make a right. Life is full of risks. One doesn't get to choose to only have perfect babies - this is the wonderful joy of life. Children with Down's syndrome, though apparently imperfect, bring great joy to their parents. Sure, when we only in materialistic and superficial terms, this does not seem like an attractive option, but the easy road is rarely the better road to travel.

In short, I strongly believe that the Eight Amendment is a critical piece of legislation, which protects human life in Ireland, at its most critical stages.

**Stephen Vaughan Christ City Church, Dublin 13/12/2016 08:58:01**

There are very few laws that we can say with certainty save lives, but the Eighth Amendment is one such law. The Pro Life Campaign commissioned an independent actuarial report which can be accessed here and which shows that, at the most conservative estimate, 100,000 people are alive in Ireland today thanks to the Eighth Amendment. This is an incredible fact that we should be immensely proud of as a country.

**Emma Lynch 13/12/2016 11:04:59**

We are adults, we are responsible and we should be in charge of our own bodies and our own lives. Not allowing us the choice is keeping us down and holding us back.

**Margaret Peoples 13/12/2016 12:17:16**

SPEAKING AS A PARENT OF A CHILD WITH A DISABILITY LET NOBODY TELL ME HE HAS NO WORTH IN THIS WORLD

**james sebastian karimbil syromalabar church 13/12/2016 12:49:27**

Please protect the mothers and Unborn.it is the duty of each and every one

**Stephen 13/12/2016 13:44:35**

INTRODUCTION

I'm proposing that the most rational thing to do is to keep the Eight amendment, because it protects the life of the mother and the child.

SCIENCE DATA

It's good that this debate be rational, and thus based on scientific facts. In the time before birth science has demonstrated the presence of a unique human being. There is a heartbeat after 20 days, and so rational scientific thought would make us strongly respect the unique child in the womb, who has potential to make a unique contribution to Irish society.

Therefore, it is important that the life of the unborn child is protected, which the eight amendment does very well.

TRAGEDY

It is horrifying to think that if the Eight Amendment had not been in place over the last 20 years, there would have been 100,000 more lives lost, the equivalent of the population of Kilkenny wiped out. So the Eight Amendment does save lives, so better not to change it. It is something we can be proud of, and keep our heads high in Europe and other countries, who do not have the benefit of this law to protect their own citizens from this dreadful tragedy.

RIGHTS

One might say it is a right to have an abortion, a 'service'. But the right to life of the child is greater. One might say let the mother decide what to do with her body: but the child is a unique vulnerable person, whether it's one month old or still in the womb, and has a right to protection. If the mother does not want the child, we should have a clear adoption process.

Obviously, it is important to protect the right to life of the mother, and everything that needs to be done should be done, even if this indirectly means the loss of the child in the womb. And this is allowed for under the eight amendment. When measured against other countries in the world, Ireland's medical profession ranks as a world leader in terms of safeguarding the lives of women. So protection of the mother is already in the Eight amendment, so rationally we should not change it.

#### REFERENDUM CHOICE

If there is a referendum on the Eight Amendment, one option must be to leave the wording as it is, so that those who do not want direct procured abortion in this country, can vote to keep the Eight. The Eight Amendment protects the lives of Mother and Child better than any alternative law in any other country, and therefore rationally should not be changed.

#### CONCLUSION

We should keep the Eight amendment, because it protects the life of the mother and the child, better than any other law in any other country. So the focus of development should be on updating services for adoption, and disability services. And that if there is a referendum, there should be a clear choice for voters to keep our proven effective law.

#### RECOMMENDATION

Keep the eight amendment.

**Michael O'Dwyer Connolly 13/12/2016 14:06:00**

There are an almost infinite number of reasons to protect the 8th amendment but here I shall list a few of the most important.

1: Abortion is a morally reprehensible act, it ends a human life unnecessarily and the 8th protects children from this, undoubtedly you've already heard much on this so I shan't linger. However I must mention that the 8th gives life and the opportunity to prosper and become outstanding citizens to thousands of babies who would otherwise have had their lives brutally ended based on the whim of people who do not comprehend the gravity of the issue.

2: From a societal perspective the trend is towards anti-abortion across the civilised world, if we look at places that have had no protection for the life of unborn children for the longest time (post-soviet countries), we see that they are trending towards restricting or outright banning abortion due to the harm it caused them over the last 80 years or so. We see this particularly in Poland and Russia who have had a massive societal and moral revival since the collapse of communism.

3: From a demographics view we can see that abortion results in a loss to population growth, something that would be disastrous in a country where the birth rate is only just

hovering around replenishment. Repealing the 8th will surely contribute to a birthrate similar to Germany for example, which is desperately struggling with the effects of an aging population.

4: The 8th is rather beautifully unique as it makes us one of the only places in the world where the right to life is absolutely enshrined in our very constitution. It shows our people and the world that we above all else respect human life, dignity and rights. One cannot understate the impact of this.

5: While the 8th must be honoured and protected, it is perhaps in need of an edit that specifies that in medical situations where both mother and child are in danger, the life of the mother takes precedent.

**Deirdre Dolan 13/12/2016 16:44:49**

In an ideal world, access to abortion wouldn't be needed. Years of sitting governments ignore this because they don't want it go on 'in our Catholic shores'. Irish women should not have to run to another country to seek medical care because our own government are too afraid to be unpopular among their super-religious electorate (many of whom I daresay are past the age of ever needing this procedure)

Again I say, in an ideal world it would be there but no one would need it.

Unfortunately that isn't reality. The toughest decision a woman or couple will make is to abort a pregnancy, I would never dream of telling her/them what to do. Enda Kenny, why would you?

**Ciaran McGinley 13/12/2016 21:04:37**

Members of the Citizens' Assembly,

The Citizens' Assembly has been asked to consider a referendum to repeal the right to life of the unborn child as protected under the 8th amendment to the Constitution. As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

The 8th amendment guarantees the equal right to life of both women and their unborn children. The 8th was approved by the people in 1983 and, since that time, has saved an estimated 250,000 lives because our abortion rate has remained much lower than that of countries with legalised abortion. In Britain for example, one in every five babies is killed by abortion. In Ireland that figure is one in every twenty. If we had Britain's abortion rate we would see 10,000 more abortions every year – or 30 more every day. No reasonable person would welcome more abortions.

The 8th amendment is a piece of legislation that ensures the protection of the most basic human rights. Science tells us that preborn babies are human beings and deserving of the

protection of society. At 21 days gestation, our hearts are already beating. Every abortion ends a human life.

The 8th amendment protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. In fact, as top medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.

Abortion also hurts women. A 2008 study (Fergusson et al) found that post-abortive women are 30% more likely to experience serious mental health problems while a 2006 study (Gissler et al) found that the suicide rate for post-abortive women was six times higher than women who had given birth.

Abortion is does not only have negative effects on women but it is also a cruel and inhumane practice towards the unborn. These children are dismembered and removed piece by piece or given a lethal injection directly into their hearts. This practice is both medieval and barbaric.

Because of our law, the equal right to life of babies with disabilities and severe life limiting conditions are guaranteed the same protections as every other child. While abortion activists treat these children as if they were already dead, the fact is that most babies, even the most severe cases, live after birth and their families find their time together enormously healing. Parents of these babies recognize their children's lives as precious and say that improved perinatal hospice care, not abortion, is what they need.

Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. I urge you to consider this carefully and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

Please protect that 8th amendment.

**emmet dooley 30/10/2016 10:45:45**

We are all about rights but here we are trying to take away the most fundamental right of all the right to life of the unborn human being who's life begins at Conception/fertilisation. Our 8th amendment should but upheld and show to those in the world who promote abortion on demand for any reason throughout the 40 weeks of pregnancy that a country can and does survive without abortion. Those who want abortion should look at each of the different abortions there are and see how traumatic and barbaric an act it is. How can you vote for something if you can't view it in full? Life should be cherished and supported and that's why the government should address the social reasons for abortion as the mothers natural reaction is to have/keep her baby but through fear will resort to abortion and often be coerced into it. adoption should be worked on and presented in a more positive and realistic light with adequate full ding and resources. The unborn heart starts to beat 16 days



after conception this should be cherished and do not stop a beating heart. Those who oppose the 8th amendment don't state to what extent abortion discriminates against the disabled and even include genderside. There will always be those who would do harm to themselves and others e em the tiny human being growing g separately inside of them these people should be supported and informed to obtain a more positive view on life not given the means of ending the life inside them by making it legal. This is a lath that there is seldom a return for if I have the right to kill the life inside me my own child then why can't I choose to end your life or my own. Life is not a choice and should be protected and supported at all stages. Life is good no matter how it is conceived!

**Carmel Martin 13/12/2016 21:47:04**

Members of the Citizens' Assembly,

The Citizens' Assembly has been asked to consider a referendum to repeal the right to life of the unborn child as protected under the 8th amendment to the Constitution. As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

The 8th amendment guarantees the equal right to life of both women and their unborn children. The 8th was approved by the people in 1983 and, since that time, has saved an estimated 250,000 lives because our abortion rate has remained much lower than that of countries with legalised abortion. In Britain for example, one in every five babies is killed by abortion. In Ireland that figure is one in every twenty. If we had Britain's abortion rate we would see 10,000 more abortions every year – or 30 more every day. No reasonable person would welcome more abortions.

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Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. I urge you to consider this carefully and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

Please protect that 8th amendment.

Thank you!

**Steven Fahy N/a 14/12/2016 00:16:18**

Abortion exists a short flight or slightly longer boat trip away.

And when women have to make that difficult decision they have to go through the extra trauma of travel during a time when support is what they need.

As a modern nation I think we should give women the respect and responsibility for their reproductive rights.

We should base our term limits on best practice (uk) and remove any stigmatising processes such as psychological evaluation.

I believe it will not lead to reckless use of abortion as I trust women to do so.

I support the repealing of the 8th amendment of the constitution and the development of supports and services for modern family planning, including abortion.

Thank you .

**Jem Geach 14/12/2016 07:55:09**

Killing a child in the womb is a heinous wrong. In addition to the death of the child this act damages women and hurts society

**Seamus O'Cearbhaill personal 14/12/2016 10:58:43**

A SOCIETY IS JUDGED IN HOW IT TREATS ITS WEAKEST MEMBERS,AND SINCE HARD CASES MAKE BAD LAW,AS ESTABLISHED INTERNATIONALLY,I URGE YOU TO SAVE THE 8TH

AMENDMENT.THIS WAS NOT PUT IN THERE LIGHTLY,AND SINCE I AM CONVINCED MOST IRISH CITIZENS ARE ANTI ABORTION,I URGE YOU TO MAINTAIN IT.

**Gillian Walsh 14/12/2016 11:18:56**

As a woman of Ireland I call on you to grant Irish women and all women living in Ireland to right to reproductive control. Our bodies are ours, no one else should make such decisions but the woman herself. I do not have the right to control your body, and nor you mine. The unjust law prevents women from living full and healthy lives where pregnancy is unwanted or unviable. Please give us our overdue rights to choice. These are our bodies. This is could be a situation any Irish woman finds herself in as a result of rape, incest, fatal foetal abnormality or simply lack of choice. The law is unclear and too complex, further complication of the amendment will again be challenged by an unexpected situation that the amendment fails to foresee. Put it to the people, clearly "Should the right to abortion be legal in Ireland?" and let the women of Ireland decide.

Thank you

**sharon mccaffrey 14/12/2016 16:09:21**

Weapons- poem Anything can be a weapon used to murder kill and harm a knife a base ball bat a hurly stick a crow bar a bomb, bullet gun or even a golf club these are the weapons of mass destruction which kill innocent and defenseless tiny little babies for their mummies have been told they have been lied to they say their daughter or son is a non human just cells a blob these weapons select by gender little girls just because they are female and sick babies are targeted with pre natal death doctors fatal diagnosis well who do they think they are Almighty God? do they have alterrior motives to sell their little baby body parts Weapons used deliberately with the intent to end a human life is always WRONG a dr for death undertakes medical malpractice as life they have sworn to save not end at all so let us all unite stand together and be bold brave courageous and strong for each and every one of us is a human person from conception with full & equal human rights we are both flesh and soul & using a weapon against anybody else causing suffering or pain to hurt or harm is always illegal unjust unfair and unequal and Discrimination Merciless UNLOVE biased and bigotry is in a court off law inadmissible so always the book at them is thrown in good judgement to use the full might force and power Equality for All to respect Human Dignity, & decommission your weaponry, now and once and for ALL and the true principles of Human Equality.

Law <https://lifesite->

[cache.s3.amazonaws.com/images/made/images/remote/https\\_s3.amazonaws.com/lifesite/baby\\_parts\\_810\\_500\\_s\\_c1.png](https://lifesite-cache.s3.amazonaws.com/images/made/images/remote/https_s3.amazonaws.com/lifesite/baby_parts_810_500_s_c1.png)

**Hana O'Connor 14/12/2016 17:31:32**

I was on jobbridge when I found out I was pregnant. My boyfriend had just been made redundant and we lived in my mother's house. I had a master's degree and was reduced to earning 125e a week because I was living with my boyfriend. This is how Ireland failed me.

There was no way I could provide for a baby when we couldn't even provide for ourselves. I couldn't even afford to travel to England. I had to get pills sent to me. When I took them I bled so heavily I thought I was dying. Have you ever lain in bed, soaked in your blood, too scared to go to the hospital because you were afraid you would be arrested? This is how Ireland failed me.

I thought I was dying and the only hope I had was to ring my GP and ask him to help me. He gave me advice which I was grateful for. Then I found out that him helping me was illegal. This is how Ireland failed me.

Those of you who buy into the lie of "women will use abortion as a contraceptive"; let me tell you this; abortion is one of the most invasive medical procedures a person can go through. You do it because you are desperate, not because it is convenient. I deserved better than thinking I was bleeding to death in my friend's bed because I had no medical official to go to for help.

**Billy Kinane 14/12/2016 18:09:51**

I wish to have a referendum on this topic

**Neil Nerney 14/12/2016 21:20:13**

To whom it concerns;

I wish to put forward my objection to the above.

All life whether born or unborn is precious and deserves a chance of life no matter how short that life may be.

Also the above represents the thin edge of the wedge and will open the door to things like aborting down syndrome babies and the like which would be wrong

**Sean long 05/11/2016 18:02:53**

I think it is time to repeal the 8th. i do not agree with using abortion as a means of contraception, but as a means of saving lives and i think the law needs to change. Women should have the right to choose. I do not think it is a decision the majority of women would enter into lightly.

**Rónan Nolan 05/11/2016 18:23:04**

Please recommend a referendum on repealing the eighth amendment. Let the people decide.

**Naveen Thomas 14/12/2016 23:31:34**

My name is Naveen Thomas. I am 25 year old man living in Dublin city. I believe the eight ammendment in the Irish constitution has saved countless lives and therefore should not be repealed. By repealing the eight amendment the most basic and fundamental of human rights Right to Life of the child inside a womb is being taken away. This would be a grave violation of human rights. Secondly if it is done Ireland would have to constitutionally define a child inside the womb as not human so as to justify the act of terminating the life of the child. The Right to Life always trumps any right to choice for any person. It is not a debatable issue whether the child inside womb from the moment of conception is a distinct human being separate from the mother. Therefore ending the life of a child inside the womb is an intrinsically barbarous act. Finally legalising abortion for cases of rape and incest is just a foot in the door towards abortion on demand. And this leads to criminal and barbarous acts like the Gosnell case in the US which the media and abortion advocates have chosen to hide from the public. A public vote should not decide whether human beings get to live or die. Therefore a referendum to repeal the eight ammendment is a foolish and morally wrong concept. I would like to urge you not repeal he eight amendment.

**Donncha Ó hAodha N/A 15/12/2016 01:39:09**

“The current constitutional position is that both the right to life of the mother and [that of] the unborn are protected and that the former prevails wherever continuation of the pregnancy poses a real and substantial risk to the mother’s life” (Gerry White). Those who wish to repeal the Eighth Amendment want to diminish the protection currently guaranteed in the case of the life of the unborn. Actually Gerry White) has also said: “The most obvious interpretation of any decision to delete article 40.3.3 is that the people will have decided to completely withdraw constitutional protection from the unborn. In this situation, the only constitutional factor at play will be the constitutional rights of the mother and clearly these would support a much more liberal regime of abortion”.

The right to life is primordial; without it all other rights are without meaning. History provides us with plenty of examples of the disasters arising where one category of human being (in this case the born) exercise powers of life and death over another category of human being (in this case the unborn). Such cases always involve the anti-principle “Might is right”. It is no surprise therefore that the preamble to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states: “the child by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth”. It is certainly sobering to recall that in the UK 90% of the unborn diagnosed with Down Syndrome in the womb are aborted. No category of human beings should be marginalised by law. We also know of course that abortion is practised even in countries of the West to effect gender discrimination – in this case, lethal discrimination – against the female unborn. It may be objected that liberalised abortion in Ireland would be restrictive, if that were legally possible. One should recall however that many of those calling for repeal of the Amendment point to UK abortion law as the exemplar to be followed. Abortion is legal in

Britain unfortunately for any detectable disability through all nine months of pregnancy, and 98% of abortions there are performed, not for health but for social reasons.

It would be preferable if the Amendment were retained. If however the campaign to hold a referendum succeeds in its aim, then there should be an honest and comprehensive public debate beforehand so that people can make an informed decision as to what a liberalised abortion regime might involve, if the Amendment were to be repealed. The public should be fully informed – preferably by means of short TV films, screened of course after the evening threshold – about the various methods of abortion, at different stages of gestation. Would the proposal be to allow abortion in some (as in the UK and in certain States of the US e.g.) or in all cases, up to the day of delivery? In any case the public should be informed beforehand about the time limit(s), if proposed,

**Dennis Maljaars 15/12/2016 02:35:14**

Unborn children are just as human as the rest of us and MUST receive protection. Please consider this and keep the laws that protect them.

**Eileen Cameron Mother 15/10/2016 11:05:13**

I hope my two daughters can grow up in a world where they have bodily autonomy

**Clare Tarleton 15/12/2016 12:58:10**

Repeal this cruel law that forces women into dangerous and painful circumstances.

I have many friends who have had tragic and difficult pregnancy, that have left them and their partners deeply scarred and broken. I have my own fears about having a pregnancy in Ireland due to a lot of what I have seen and felt them friends and family go through, along with other women around Ireland and the world.

Repeal the 8th, move Ireland forward not back.

-Clare

**Emer Murphy 14/11/2016 14:15:34**

I wish to add my support to people calling for repeal of the 8th amendment. I want Ireland to allow choice for women. I want Ireland to trust women to make their own choices and not to force an ideology onto them that they don't choose for themselves.

**Aoife O Connor Student 15/12/2016 13:29:54**

At seventeen I found myself sitting down with a pen and paper a list of possible outcomes and solutions to an unplanned pregnancy. At seventeen I found myself ashamed, searching the internet for answers, information, for help. None of that I found, at seventeen I was forced to make choices with no professional help or guidance. It's an awful feeling, knowing that the only help you can receive is across an ocean. How alone do you think I felt? The

overwhelming pain and humiliation oppressed on me by the eight amendment is something I carry with me for life. No one should have to go through what I had to.

**Chantelle Ni Chroinin 15/12/2016 13:45:41**

I am strongly in favour of repeal of the 8th amendment of the Constitution of Ireland.

**Ericka Duffy 15/12/2016 14:02:59**

Our Republic was founded on a principle of equality - not just between man and woman but between rich and poor. The Eighth Amendment widens the gap in equality in both cases. In Ireland, a pregnant woman does not have the same bodily autonomy as a man. The law narrows the options she has; even as the different scenarios a pregnant woman can find herself in, widens. If a pregnant woman finds herself in poverty, her choices are restricted even further. It is a reality that women are travelling abroad to exercise a liberty not given to them by this Republic. What is a law that cannot be enforced? Moreover, what is a law that can rule some but not all based on their monetary standing? It is a sadder fact that poor women are unable to make the same decision as their richer counterparts. A rich woman has more choice than a poor one, a poor man has more choice than a rich woman. I do not believe this inequity should stand.

**Patrick Mc Cormick 15/12/2016 14:04:10**

Let's not be embarrassed but be proud. We protect human life in Ireland. Fact. We celebrate 100 years of independence this year. Let us not now give in to outside influences and repeal the 8th, one of the last great bastions of civilisation still standing in the world today. Ireland is great as are it's people's and it's laws.

To the member of the citizens convention who is reading this. You have power. Please use it wisely. Protect human life at all stages. You won't be alive in another 100 years in 2116 but by your actions now you can ensure that someone else will, someone who the 8th will protect. This is your responsibility. I don't know you but please represent my views and do yourself and your country proud and stand up for what is right and don't be embarrassed to protect the 8th. Now is your time to be great.

Thank you for taking the time. To read this submission.

**Killian Broderick 15/12/2016 14:14:34**

Please consider a proper public debate regarding the eighth amendment with a view to bringing it to a referendum.

**Anthony Trainor World Apostate of Fatima, Ulster. 15/12/2016 14:29:01**

The Citizens' Assembly has been asked to consider a referendum to repeal the right to life of the unborn child as protected under the 8th amendment to the Constitution. As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

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Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. I urge you to consider this carefully and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

**Claudia Tormey 15/12/2016 14:50:15**

I am a 29 year old Irish woman, thinking about my future I consider whether or not that picture includes children. When I eventually make these decisions, they need to be MY decisions. If I fall pregnant and decide I cannot have this child, that is MY decision. If I decide



to have a child yet I experience complications during pregnancy and need medical assistance, maybe even termination, I expect that will also be MY decision.

However, this is not reality for me or any woman living in Ireland. I refuse to be bullied and shamed by an outdated law that refuses to look women in the eye and trust that we can and will make the right decisions for our bodies and our families.

Our leaders have no right to associate law with their personal guilt or opinion. Whether or not you hold religious, spiritual or traditional values - this should not be influencing the laws of our people. Detach personal opinion from your profession - listen to the people and let us decide the future of our country and people. Stand up and do your job - this is a democracy and we have spoken.

We are not criminals. We are human beings. Please, repeal the 8th.

**Brendan Kelly 15/11/2016 13:32:44**

This is the first time I have ever made contact with any group /newspaper etc re. abortion. I sincerely believe that abortion is not the 'solution 'to crisis pregnancy. I think the woman /couple involved certainly need support ,financial /emotional/practical /counselling etc at a very daunting time

**Fr. Thomas Bartolomeo 1937 15/11/2016 18:17:57**

The "Isle of Saints" should continue to protect unborn innocents.

**Maresa Forde 15/12/2016 15:37:00**

In 2015 I was afraid Ireland would not support marriage equality and so I didn't think we should have a vote on giving or taking a right from others. When Ireland produced a yes vote, I was so proud.

Now the debate is the rights of the unborn, I'm afraid of the outcome , and I don't believe we should have the right to take rights away from others. This debate is being framed as a womens rights issue. But it is a human rights issue. My main issue with a referendum is that coverage is so unbalanced. Prochoice has a lot of funding behind it, and that will likely secure a repeal. At the very least we need equality of funding and representation.

Abortion is the main solution proposed in crisis pregnancy. People have said to me in the past, 'what if a daughter of mine was raped? ' Obviously that would be horrendous. But my child's child is my grandchild, and erasing the child won't erase a rape. It seems a singular approach to a multitude of problems. Why aren't other issues addressed? Such as the poor sentencing for sexual offences. Why is palliative care appropriate for a terminally ill 7 year old, but for 5 month old in utero, termination is acceptable. Should unborn children take the fall because they're not here to speak for themselves or to see in the flesh? The unborn child is a clump of cells as much as any of us are, just a smaller clump. Savita Halapanavar did not die due to a lack of abortion availability. She died due to medical negligence. Doctors

have the means to terminate a child if the mother's life is in danger. A woman should never be left to die along with her child. If she can be saved, she should be saved. That has always been the case and a repeal won't change that. I say celebrate the 8th, as it protects women and babies. However you would treat a four year old, or any born child is how you should treat the unborn. They are the same. We are the same. We all started out there. It is shortsighted and convenient to disregard the humanity of a life just because you can't see their face, you haven't felt their grasp around your finger, or seen the family resemblance in their face. A life is a life. Without the right to life, all other rights are meaningless. Please at least address the issues of funding and representation so that the Pro Life gets a fair chance.

Thank you for taking time to read this submission

**Rachel O Riordan 15/12/2016 15:46:17**

45,000,000.

That's a rough figure. Give or take a couple of hundred thousand. 45 million abortions in the US since abortion was legalised. That's 45 million people, lives not lived. And not to mention the children and grandchildren that would have been. As a young woman in my twenties, fully aware and appreciative of my rights as a woman, I stand very firmly on the side of life in this debate.

I want to live in a country that is on the side of women when it comes to their mental and physical health as well as their emotional well-being. A country that supports women who are in the awful situation of an unplanned or unwanted pregnancy. 45 million convinced me that abortion is not right. And abortion is not 'a right'. It is a negative, quick-fix kind-of-a-solution that harms more than it helps. And it is not a question of religion or God, but one of human rights.

There are of course the hard cases. But surely, life sentences should fall on the head of the rapist, not on the person conceived in rape. Instead of being encouraged to 'nip it in the bud' ('it' being a baby with a disability) and terminate asap, greater support and resources should be available for prospective parents of children with disabilities. Children with disabilities enhance and enrich our schools and teach children how to care for and support the vulnerable in society. As a teacher I see the benefits of having an inclusive and diverse classroom. With all our talk of equality and an all-inclusive society, are we going to stand for these children being 'screened out'? It makes me shudder at the core.

The hard cases-rape, life limiting diagnoses, profound disability to name a few, do make abortion sound an appropriate option and remedy. But as in the US, were there 45 million hard cases? No. Of course not. But this is where legalising abortion for these hard cases leads to. There is no 'in certain cases'. Everyone's case can be deemed 'a hard case' depending on circumstances. Sure, Irish women are having abortions anyway. But removing the constitutional protection for the unborn will propel abortions of the future Irish population onto a whole new scale.

We won't be up to 45 million in three decades but the number will certainly be far higher than it has been in the last three decades.

(See the UK figures here: <http://www.johnstonsarchive.net/policy/abortion/ab-unitedkingdom.html> As you scroll down, think of those thousands as people. Not medical procedures. Just try it.)

Please protect the future of unborn Irish men and women.

Protect the 8th amendment.

**Paul Tran Mr. 15/12/2016 15:55:11**

Abortion is murder of the innocents thus it is sinful.

**Dairin Evers-Nolan private member of the public 15/12/2016 16:04:36**

As a biology teacher I understand and teach about human reproduction. The development of the baby is rapid in the first 12 weeks of gestation and in addition to a heartbeat at 21days there is also the development all organs and limbs. After the 12week period is it simply a matter of growing. I strongly feel that rather than promoting / providing abortion Ireland should focus on the development of adoption services in order to allow those with an unwanted pregnancy to connect with those who are desperate for a child and who, for one reason or another, are not able to have one. The fact that such individuals have to wait years to adopt is ridiculous. I strongly suggest that in your recommendations you put forward this idea before widespread abortion is introduced as and it will be very difficult to come back from widespread easy availability which, lets be honest, is what will happen. From a personal point of view my own father wanted me aborted. My mother was not in agreement and went on to raise myself and my brothers primarily on her own. I do believe that the fact that abortion was not freely available within Ireland removed that additional pressure she would have been put under to have me aborted. What we really need is better services for those in difficult situations not a short term quick fix which may lead to years of emotional upset for the women who were pressured/ forced / into an abortion. I wish you well in your deliberations

**Blaithin Farry 15/12/2016 16:24:52**

I am no longer a resident in Ireland but I am a proud Irish citizen. I have seen and experienced the shame and stigma that the current legislation and old religious rhetoric has cast on vulnerable women in Ireland. I have seen women carry a weighty secret with no support from those closest to them. I have seen women take medical and physical risks because they can't seek advice and comfort from the medical community in Ireland. I fear for my friends and family members who might become pregnant and be forced into a potential medical situation that is out of their control. I feel for a medical community that can't provide the care they know they should be able to give. The 8th Amendment deals with more than just abortion. Our reproductive care in Ireland should be informed by

professional medical, social and legal practitioners, to form proper legislation that is sensible and safe, instead of it being informed from ideology as loose as the Constitution. I appreciate this is a sensitive subject for many, but choice is empathy, and at the moment, Ireland empathy doesn't extend to it's women. I would like to see the 8th amendment repealed so Ireland is a safer place for pregnant women and girls.

**rachel mcdonnell 15/12/2016 16:42:36**

I am now 65 years old and when I was young many of my friends and family left ireland to have abortions in England... for various reasons they had these abortions.... some were fearful .... some knew they would not be accepted in society at that time....some saw the pregnancy as a mistake and would interfere with their careers.... the years passed.....we kept in touch.....and each and everyone of those women regretted what they had done....some never had children ..... some had children..... others went mad and spent many times in Mental Institutions.....all of them regretted their decisions/choice as they all turned 40 and over....thats when it really hits us..... when we probably have no choice to have children..... too old..... so do the right thing and don't let this happen again..... please do not repeal the 8th amendment.... leave things as they are and perhaps set up a Service for these Women who need assistance in Pregnancy. Abortion is wrong and it hurts the Women who have them.... Rachel McDonnell

**Sheila and Sean O'Dowd irish Citizens 15/12/2016 17:18:32**

The Citizens' Assembly has been asked to consider a referendum to repeal the right to life of the unborn child as protected under the 8th amendment to the Constitution. As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

The 8th amendment guarantees the equal right to life of both women and their unborn children. The 8th was approved by the people in 1983 and, since that time, has saved an estimated 250,000 lives because our abortion rate has remained much lower than that of countries with legalised abortion. In Britain for example, one in every five babies is killed by abortion. In Ireland that figure is one in every twenty. If we had Britain's abortion rate we would see 10,000 more abortions every year – or 30 more every day. No reasonable person would welcome more abortions.

The 8th amendment is a piece of legislation that ensures the protection of the most basic human rights. Science tells us that preborn babies are human beings and deserving of the protection of society. At 21 days gestation, our hearts are already beating. Every abortion ends a human life.

The 8th amendment protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. In fact, as top medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman

has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.

Abortion also hurts women. A 2008 study (Fergusson et al) found that post-abortive women are 30% more likely to experience serious mental health problems while a 2006 study (Gissler et al) found that the suicide rate for post-abortive women was six times higher than women who had given birth.

Abortion is does not only have negative effects on women but it is also a cruel and inhumane practice towards the unborn. These children are dismembered and removed piece by piece or given a lethal injection directly into their hearts. This practice is both medieval and barbaric.

Because of our law, the equal right to life of babies with disabilities and severe life limiting conditions are guaranteed the same protections as every other child. While abortion activists treat these children as if they were already dead, the fact is that most babies, even the most severe cases, live after birth and their families find their time together enormously healing. Parents of these babies recognize their children's lives as precious and say that improved perinatal hospice care, not abortion, is what they need.

Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. I urge you to consider this carefully and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

Please protect that 8th amendment.

**Gemma McCarthy 15/12/2016 17:55:16**

Everyone has the right to life - None of us are perfect!

**Caroline Regan UL Student 15/12/2016 17:58:08**

**Fiona Kiely 15/12/2016 18:04:18**

My sister had her first baby in the past 2 weeks. She was born at 29 weeks old. This little baby is fighting to stay alive and with the miracle of science it is possible that she will live a long and healthy life. Babies are being aborted when they are just a few weeks younger than my niece. I wish people would realise it is a full grown baby, a life we are dealing with. Our constitution protects both mother and baby. Abortion is not the answer ever. Please let us value everyone's life, not just our own....

**Cian Tolan 15/12/2016 19:00:11**

I wish for every living being to be given the right to the protection of their life.

**Tara Flynn 14/10/2016 22:09:02**

Irish women deserve to vote on our bodily autonomy, a basic human right. The 8th affects consent during continued pregnancy and - in the event of a crisis pregnancy - keeps Irish women from getting the care they need safely and at home. Everyone in this country knows someone who has traveled or put themselves at risk by acting alone. We must acknowledge the reality of the situation here and legislate accordingly, as is done in other civilized nations. Please consider recommending a referendum so that the vote can be put to the country to repeal the 8th amendment.

**Fr. Daniel Whelan Catholic priest in the USA 15/12/2016 19:35:02**

My family origin, Whelan, is from Ireland: County Cork. I have always been happy to say that Ireland is a country which values and protects all human life. A country that cannot and will not protect the unborn is doomed to fall and will never have peace. Abortion is never the answer to an unplanned pregnancy. A country such as Ireland can find other ways to help women in these situations. Please do the right thing and do not go with the flow of so much of the rest of the world, including my country, and allow the killing of unborn children.

**Michael Brauders 15/12/2016 20:20:42**

Members of the Citizens' Assembly,

The Citizens' Assembly has been asked to consider a referendum to repeal the 8th amendment to the Constitution. As an Irish citizen who believes in the value of every human life from the moment of conception, this matter causes me great concern.

The 8th amendment guarantees the equal right to life of both women and their unborn children. The 8th was approved by the people in 1983 and since that time, has saved an estimated 250,000 lives. Our abortion rate has remained much lower than that of countries with legalised abortion. For a matter of fact Irish abortion rates have dropped considerably in the past decade.

UK 1968, the first year after abortion was legalized, there were 25,000 abortions, 2014 UK abortion rates were 201,500. However in the US 1980 25 per 1,000 women aged 15-44 years ended their pregnancies with abortion, in recent times due to abortion restrictions at state level and substandard services by Kermit Gosnell, Douglas Karper et al in 2013 12 per 1,000 aged 15-44 years chose abortion. This clearly indicates legitimizing a practice leads to an increase in demand

The 8th amendment ensures the protection of the most basic human rights. Science tells us that preborn babies are human beings and deserving of the protection of society. Every abortion ends a human life.

The 8th amendment protects the lives of pregnant mothers (including my sister who suffers with uncontrolled epilepsy) and allows our doctors to provide all necessary treatments and life-saving care to mothers experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. In fact, as

top medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.

Abortion also hurts women. A 2008 study (Fergusson et al) found that post-abortive women are 30% more likely to experience serious mental health problems while a 2006 study (Gissler et al) found that the suicide rate for post-abortive women was six times higher than women who had given birth.

Abortion is does not only have negative effects on women but it is also a cruel and inhumane practice towards the unborn. These children are dismembered and removed piece by piece or given a lethal injection directly into their hearts. This practice is both medieval and barbaric.

Because of our law, the equal right to life of babies with disabilities and severe life limiting conditions are guaranteed the same protections as every other child. While abortion activists treat these children as if they were already dead, the fact is that most babies, even the most severe cases, live after birth and their families find their time together enormously healing. Parents of these babies deserve improved perinatal hospice care, not abortion.

Michael Brauders, Gorey, Co. Wexford.

**Brian Brady 15/12/2016 20:36:50**

Save the 8th ammendment

**Baby Thomas 15/12/2016 20:39:14**

I plead this government that at any cost abortion should never be legalised in this country. Whenever a child is formed in mother's womb God our father has a plan for that child and every child has the right to live. By legalising abortion we are destroying God's plan by giving the people the right to destroy an innocent life. It would be wrong to give anyone the power to take an innocent human life especially the life of an innocent and helpless baby in mother's womb who is unable to fight for her/ his right. I repeatedly request this government that 8th amendment may never take away from the law.

Thank You for considering my request.

**Fiona Creagh Personal submission 15/12/2016 20:53:34**

I would like to keep the eighth amendment in our constitution. It promotes life and safeguards Irish children and their mothers. Why kill the young when we are an aging country which needs our young. Mothers seeking abortion need support and encouragement not assistance in ending the life of their children. Why spend millions on something that is unnecessary, post natal depression and suicide risk increases with every abortion that a woman has. What about the silent partner the father who has no voice for his child ? What about the special needs child or the child with life threatening conditions

they deserve life too. Who is going to take the responsibility for the lives that have been ended as a result of abortion? Ireland is a safe place for children and their parents, let it continue that way and let us nurture our young as that is what the unborn child is.

**Marion van der Wel 15/12/2016 21:05:41**

Hi, as a mother of four young daughters I feel it necessary to try to ensure that their futures as Irish women are bright ones. That they will live in a country that upholds justice and the rights of all human beings born and unborn. It seems like a very simple concept but unfortunately, due to many untruths and 'liberal' agendas our very constitution may be compromised.

I have been disappointed time and time again by the media coverage of some cases that have been indeed a great source of human suffering but the facts of these cases have been gravely portrayed in a distorted manner that are simply not true.

The government's stance in compensating people travelling for abortion is actually illegal. It saddens me that the government is not standing up for those unable to stand up for themselves.

A recent IFPA seminar 'Reforming Ireland's Law's: Developing women-centred healthcare practice in post-repeal Ireland,' was quite disturbing in itself. Terms such as 'reproductive rights' and 'women-centred' seem so much in contradiction to my understanding of these terms. Surely a society that provides protection for the rights of its unborn citizens is one to be commended.

By compromising the eighth amendment we would be dealing a devastating blow to our nation for generations to come and history, I believe, would not look favourably on it.

There are truly devastating situations, but not for one second do I believe that any of these situations are made better by an abortion.

No life is perfect but who are we to decide who survives and who doesn't. There is a harshness within some individuals, especially those who pontificate about reproductive rights as if an abortion should be an option, there are other ways that should be explored. If a child is deemed imperfect then parents need to be loved and supported in every way possible, but not this.

It worries me even more that some obstetricians feel the eighth amendment needs to be changed.

As human beings we see ourselves as being evolved and unfortunately some learned people appear to have lost their humanity in this debate. Supporting people in a devastating situation is what obstetric people need to be doing, I agree whole heartedly with this, but how they sometimes do it is where I have a big problem. If a child is diagnosed in the womb with a devastating condition it is such a difficult road. There are hospices and supports for



women facing a traumatic pregnancy so they will never be alone in it. These measures need to be developed and not jump straight into repealing the eighth.

In the words of Leonard Cohen, 'there is a crack in everything, that's how the light gets in.' I would urge some learned obstetricians and ministers to acknowledge the 'cracks' and let the 'light' in. In light there is hope, this is something we must not lose sight of.

We are a compassionate nation that doesn't discriminate against our unborn citizens' imperfections and I'm so proud of this.

**Dominique Barry Pause Play Collective 15/12/2016 21:07:20**

OUR BODY OUR CHOICE!! . THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE IRISH GOVERNMENT SHOULD RETIRE !!!!OUT WITH THE OLD WAY OF THINKING .

**Jess Cardenas Electrical contractor 15/12/2016 21:24:59**

"TO WHOM MUCH IS GIVEN MUCH WILL BE REQUIRED". Evidence of this truth all over the world. México. Soon after it legalized abortion Exteem violence bigins, Venezuela; Chavez speaks ill of pope he soon dies. Philipins; they choose still-Catholi leader, again great violan e bigins and abandons USA. Look at Europe at large. Defend life, defend the Catholic faith or suffer the consequences. God bless.

**Stelian Sala 15/12/2016 21:38:56**

By repealing the eight amendment the Right to Life of the child inside a womb is being violated. Ending the life of a child inside the womb is wrong. Legalising abortion for selective cases is just a step towards abortion on demand. A public vote should not decide whether human beings get to live or die. I would like to urge you not repeal the eight amendment.

Every life is valuable. From the time of conception to the last breath. And a majority vote does not get to decide on which lives are valuable and which are not depending on their convenience.

**Maureen Page Prolife 15/12/2016 22:06:32**

As an Irish citizen I want the 8th amendment protected as I believe in the protection of both mother and baby .

**Paul McGregor Individual 15/12/2016 22:14:04**

Sir/Madam.

I plead with the assembled citizens of Ireland that this nation neither needs an assembly nor a referendum on the protection of the preborn Irish child.

The organised and well financed lobby promoting abortion use emotive language with the support of the mainstream media to extend liberal agendas. They speak of babies conceived

through rape or incest. This violent crime or betrayal of trust by loved ones is a tragic circumstance. The conception of the baby in such circumstances is tragic. The victim needs compassionate support from society: But let us not punish the baby for her father's said crime. A 5 year old would not be put to death if her father were a rapist. To do so would be inhumane and would rightly attract worldwide condemnation. Why should a 5 month old preborn be so destroyed? Why put the mother through a future of crushing loss and regret to further compound her misery? A preborn baby is always innocent and should not be punished. There are countless testimonies of babies conceived in these circumstances who have matured and actually are quite relieved with the choice their mother took and of mothers who cherish their child despite the circumstances surrounding their conception. They speak of disability. They speak of abnormality: This is discriminatory. Babies should not be subject to death merely because they have a disability or because they will have a short lifespan. They still have the ability to love and be loved. If any other single group were singled out for destruction, it would quite rightly be unlawful, immoral & unjust. Those who will have a short life should be given support with networks of helpers, perinatal hospice care and be allowed to experience a lifetime of love in whatever time has been ordained him.

They speak of choice and human rights: A spine sucked into a Hoover or decapitation or dismemberment or burning preborn babies denies her her future choices. It denies a basic human right to life. It is no longer "my body" but that of a new and unique individual. Over 50% of future feminists are denied the right to choose. Those rights have been denied her. (Over 50%? - the UK have failed to prosecute over sex selective abortions lest it offend an alien culture).

In summary - less than 50 years after abortion was introduced into Britain, 7 MILLION have died through abortion. It is now one in five pregnancies. The circumstances allowing it have never changed. It is now on demand, a form of contraception. Constitutional protection since 1983 in Ireland has saved an estimated hundred thousand Irish lives. In 1916 the proclamation of independence stated that "In the name of God... (we strike for) Equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens... cherishing ALL of the children of the nation equally". This government has relinquished responsibility to stand up to outside intervention and thus has failed its unborn citizens. In the name of God do not recommend a referendum

**John Menton Private citizen 15/12/2016 22:40:07**

As a father and grand father I do not wish to have the Constitution changed as I feel that the rights of the unborn can not be heard. Many who had abortions have lived to regret it for the rest of their lives. I feel that the medical professionals for whom I have the greatest respect will carry out their duties with the concern for both the mother and child. The greatest fear I have is that abortion once legalised may be used other than the reason for which is meant under the Amendment.

**Edel Crummey 15/12/2016 22:40:51**

Time to Repeal The Eighth Amendment so that women faced with difficult decisions during a difficult pregnancy no longer have to leave the State at what is a traumatic enough time in their lives and can make whatever choice is necessary for them in their own jurisdiction. Give women the same rights as men that they have full autonomy over their own bodies. Stop exporting our difficult decisions to Britain and finally clear up the mess that is the 8th amendment. Women who don't want to make that difficult choice to terminate a pregnancy won't have to and likewise if a woman needs to make that decision, it should be her right to choose. Please do the right thing here and Repeal The 8th.

**Miriam Maher Personal 15/12/2016 23:03:52**

My concern is to protect and promote the lives of those involved in pregnancy, from conception through to birth, maternal and unborn life. Life in all its forms, each of which regardless of ability, capability or disability is of infinite value. My hope is that the 8th Amendment will be saved. Because it is the last bastion of protection for the vulnerable unborn baby. It is also the last bastion of protection for the pregnant mother who's choice in the adverse circumstances of a crisis pregnancy needs to promise a future of peace.

I am a health professional in a major hospital in this country. I have met countless women and men affected by crisis pregnancy. I've met them before and after varying decisions as to how to handle this crisis. I have yet to meet a parent who regrets giving life to their baby. Many parents in the tragic circumstance of having a palliatively ill baby desperately need in a raw and appealing state, the provision of perinatal hospice care to give them precious time with precious little time. As one mother said to me "she lived for 17 seconds and in that time she looked at me, blinked twice and took a breath. Those seconds mean as much to me as if they were 17 years." Please let these beautiful harmless vulnerable little people live. And support their mothers in their heartbreaking circumstances.

**Helen Gillen 15/12/2016 23:10:07**

As a free citizen of Ireland I wish to voice an appeal for the most vulnerable in our society, the unborn.

The 8th amendment must be upheld and must not be repealed for it gives protection to unborn children. Our unborn children.

No one has the right to take the life of another. Modern day eugenics offers false ideologies polished and perfected to argue that these beings aren't even human.

Do we as a nation rich in heritage, grit and resilience bow to untruth. It is argued in today's society that the unborn aren't human. This is a grave lie!

When exactly did our nation and we as Irish citizens need anyone's permission to live? To even be recognised as "human"? Just when is one permitted to be human and by whose authority? Yet we now hear that the unborn aren't human. I believe life begins at

conception and should cease only at natural death. No person should be put to death by the action of another.

It beggars belief that the atrocity of abortion hinges on such nonsensical arguments. Yet this is what is on the agenda these days.

The 8th amendment is one which safeguards the lives of women and their babies ensuring physicians recognise that they are treating two lives. 2 beating hearts.

In my opinion repealing the 8th amendment would serve to open the flood gates to abortion. In other words, the act of stopping a beating heart, the killing of children.

To legalise abortion in the event of special circumstances will inevitably lead to widespread abortion as normal. Unborn children diagnosed with "abnormalities" are being used to justify abortion.

No one has the right to stop a beating heart. Unborn children with disabilities have every right to life.

Therefore I raise my right as a citizen of this nation to voice my opposition to repealing the 8th amendment.

Ireland has consistently been one of the safest countries in the world to give birth in. Everyone has a right to life. Let us protect both

As a free citizen of Ireland I wish to voice an appeal for the most vulnerable in our society, the unborn.

The 8th amendment must be upheld and must not be repealed for it gives protection to unborn children. Our unborn children.

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Do we as a nation rich in heritage, grit and resilience bow to untruth. It is argued in today's society that the unborn aren't human. This is a grave lie!

When exactly did our nation and we as Irish citizens need anyone's permission to live? To even be recognised as "human"? Just when is one permitted to be human and by whose authority? Yet we now hear that the unborn aren't human. I believe life begins at conception and should cease only at natural death. No child should be put to death by the action of any person.

It beggars belief that the atrocity of abortion hinges on such nonsensical arguments. Yet this is what is on the agen

**Jim Maher Personal 15/12/2016 23:11:34**

I strongly oppose any changes to the 8th Amendment. I for one feel privileged to be living in a country where children and mothers are so safe, children of all ages I.e. From conception. Changing the constitution will have the same effect as it has had in other countries by opening the flood gates eventually to abortion on demand. There are so many couples longing for children more importance needs to be placed on the rights of the child and not the choice of the mother. I am a father of 5.

**Luarena McCormick 15/12/2016 23:26:04**

I would be very upset if this article was repealed as I believe all human life is sacred , born and unborn. I think the repeal of the 8th amendment would lead to a more liberal attitude to abortion in years to come. Life in whatever form is a gift and who are we to make laws to take away this gift.

**Ciara Fox 15/12/2016 23:43:20**

I believe every human being whether man or woman straight by or gay has their own right to decide what happens with their own body!!! I feel very strongly about this it is time to repeal the 8th amendment!!!

**Jordyn Power 15/12/2016 23:45:02**

I believe the 8th amendment should be repealed because women should have the right to decide what is best for their physical and mental health. It needs to be repealed because women live in fear of the beliefs of the Catholic Church surrounding abortion. Many women travel abroad daily to receive an abortion, travel and expense are both adding to the stress of leaving a place we considered to be a safe haven to receive medical attention. The 8th amendment needs to be repealed. Irish society needs to enter the 21st century and allow women (and their possible partners) to decide what is best for them.

**Elaine Haverty 17/11/2016 22:18:14**

I have worked with people with disabilities for years and the joy and humour they have brought is second to none. Therefore it absolutely horrifies me to see the number of lives considered worthless because they have Down's syndrome or some other form of disability. Is this not discrimination? Because they are still in the womb they can just be killed? I think of the battles faced by people who are so severely disabled by society and now not only are they challenged with access to buildings etc but they are not even being given a chance to live! Hitler wanted to create a 'perfect' race. Are we any better? Is the only deciding factor for whether a baby lives or not is whether or not their mother wants them. As a woman I want control over what happens with my body but a baby in my womb is not part of my body. They are a separate living human being. I urge you to seriously consider the implications of removing this amendment. If it is removed, it is unlikely to ever be reinstated. This is not an argument about being a progressive society. It is about protecting the wonder and beauty of a human life.

**Padraic Kelly 16/12/2016 00:35:21**

Hello

My name is Padraic Kelly and i am 49 years of age. When i was in my mother's womb i developed a birth mark on my nose and upper lip area which led to me developing a bilateral cleft palate medical condition. This condition meant i had to have a few operations during my life and some speech therapy as well. It has not made life easy at times but i am glad to have been born and lived to this present time. Apart from believing that once fertilisation occurs anyway that there is a new human life present in the womb and that it should not be destroyed and this is protected in the present state of the 8th Amendment i also feel that if it is amended that unborn babies like i was would be in greater danger of being aborted. With the option of prenatal scans now babies with defects are much more likely to be aborted. I feel every life is worth living and being allowed to be lived.

Kind regards, Padraic Kelly

**Joanne Murphy private citizen 16/12/2016 00:43:52**

Dear Assembly Members,

Before I had a child with Special Needs I was quite indifferent to the 8th. In fact, I thought it was unnecessary, religious overkill. But, since my son's arrival I realise how forward thinking the 8th really is. It protects those with Special Needs. It champions their right to life. It proclaims to the World that disabled is not "less" in our society. It is a rebuke to those societies that gone down the route of aborting children with disabilities. It is the one thing that stands between us and obliterating all the children with congenital abnormalities in this country. Imagine what it would be like if this was the last generation of children with Down's Syndrome born in this country? What would it be like? What would we be like as a nation if we consent to that? There are massacres taking place all over the world at the present time, none of whicj we can stop. But, this is one we can stop.

Kind Regards,

Joanne Murphy

**Rita Daly private person 16/12/2016 02:10:30**

I wish to retain the Eight Amendment as it protects the unborn children of this nation. Pope John Paul 11 who is now Saint John Paul 11 said " A nation who kills its own children has no future". WAKE UP PEOPLE OF IRELAND. The decision that each one of us make now forms our future and the future of our children. Do you really want to live and to bring up your children in a culture of death, because if the protection of the Eight Amendment is remove that is what we will have. Each person regardless of your culture or religion has an obligation to do what is right and just, and to do it now. Do not have the blood of innocent children on your hands or your conscience. Abortion is the murder of our precious children.

Do not take their lives away from them. It is not yours to take. Retain the Eight Amendment.

**K L 16/12/2016 05:17:07**

I do not even know how to begin. How do you put into words pleas for the life of the innocent to be spared? Protected? The idea that the preborn might have the same protections as their mothers is a dream for which countless people around the world fight. That my children should have the same defense before the law that I do. Please, do not take that protection away from them.

**Marie Rooney 16/12/2016 07:16:45**

I am writing to you to tell you how the 8th Amendment has created my family. My first born son was not born by me but by his affectionately called "Tummy Mummy". She gave him life and life gave him the gift of him. When she picked us to be his adoptive parents we could not have been more overjoyed., She told her social worker how she was so happy that he was going to a good home with a mum and dad. We have an open adoption arrangement which means she and our son get to see each other every 6-12 months. She lives with no regrets and both are happy to see each other., There are so few adoptions in Ireland now which is really is a shame, we thought our son would be an only child. But 3 years later, I gave birth to his brother. There is absolutely no difference in the love we feel for each of our sons an Tummy mummy is delighted that our son has a brother. People often say "Gosh you are so brave to meet his tummy mummy" but my reply is "meeting her is a very positive experience and removes the mystery for both of them and this gives them peace. How many mothers who aborted their babies have to live with this mystery of what might have been. Vulnerable women need to be protected from this in exhaustible grief. Please save children like my son who brings so much joy into our lives and the lives of everyone around him.

**Lorna Bogue - Welfare spokesperson for the Green Party The Green Party An Comhaontas Ghlas 16/12/2016 08:18:04**

A Bhaill an Tionóil Saoránach,

Please find attached<sup>3</sup> the Green Party's submission to the assembly. It sets out our policy, which calls for an immediate referendum to repeal the Eighth Amendment of the Irish Constitution and also outlines the legislation that we would enact following that action. We submit this to the assembly in order to assist you in your deliberation on bringing forth a referendum. We would also like to highlight the importance of supporting those who wish to act as legislators in the Oireachtas in devising a clear plan for what happens if that referendum is successful and a legal framework is required following the repeal of the Eighth Amendment.

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<sup>3</sup> This can be found in annex.

You have been entrusted with a very important duty and we commend your dedication to the task you have been set and the seriousness and respect with which you are treating this process. . We have observed the proceedings through media coverage and the attendance of our representative Oliver Moran at the second meeting as an observer.

While we support the assembly in your efforts we would like you to note that your time and effort in this capacity is required only due to the failure or unwillingness of members of the Oireachtas to act on this matter. We expect and hope that we are not the only political party or group of Oireachtas members who have submitted policy documents or some form of vision for the future to this assembly. We believe that it is the duty of our legislative bodies to respond to civic and moral issues within society and as such this current process represents a failure within the political system.

There are many expert groups who have written briefings and model legislation for the use of legislators. All of the information that you are being provided with is already available to Oireachtas members and has been for a very long time. You may deem it appropriate to suggest legislation or some form of model for lawful termination of pregnancies in Ireland if the Eight Amendment is repealed. However, no further legislative action may be taken until the Eighth Amendment is submitted to the people of Ireland in the form of a referendum.

The Green Party asks that you recommend for the immediate calling of a referendum in order that this conversation be opened up to your fellow citizens. We believe that this issue is fundamental to our citizens' human rights and that we should all, as a community, be allowed to add our voices to the debate. We trust that such a call would be immediately acted upon by the government of the day. Failure to do so would constitute a breach of trust between you, the Citizen's Assembly and your commitment to this process, and the Oireachtas.

We wish you well and hope the assembly reaches consensus with amity and goodwill.

**Tom Major 16/12/2016 08:24:33**

Dear Sirs/Madams.

Let's be frank, a repeal of the 8th will lead to abortion on demand, pure and simple.

In Ireland there is no crime on our statute that carries a death sentence, no rape, child molestation, murder, or anything else no matter how heinous, but up for consideration is a death sentence for the "crime" of being unborn.

Abortion is a planned killing, which makes it murder in my view.

Do not repeal the 8th.



**Thomas Erbsloh 16/12/2016 09:15:13**

The 8th amendment should be repealed. The constitution is no place to deal with complex issues like this. Women should be empowered through legislation to make their own choices regarding pregnancies, as is appropriate in a pluralist society.

**Eimear phelan 16/12/2016 09:27:23**

I live abroad but am very passionate about the repeal the eighth movement. In a world where women make up the majority of the work force and an overpopulated planet, I'm of the most important things we can do is give women the right to choose.

**Susanne Spiritual Revival Ministry 16/12/2016 09:57:20**

Please do not legalize abortion

**Sophie Kelliher 16/12/2016 10:13:43**

Take the shame away from this painful decision. No woman makes the decision lightly and thinks about it for the rest of her life. The least we can expect is not to be vilified and ostracised by our government.

**Angharad McEwan 16/12/2016 10:23:03**

As a woman and Irish citizen I believe that what happens with my uterus should be off limits to anyone other than myself. My uterus, my choice.

**Hugh McDaid 16/12/2016 10:38:45**

In my view this amendment violates human rights and is discriminatory. Abortion should be decriminalised and appropriate healthcare and medical services should be enacted to ensure safe and regulated abortion access. Individuals should not have to travel abroad at great personal and financial expense, or be forced to carry on with the pregnancy if they cannot travel. The Eighth Amendment should be repealed in its entirety.

**Anna O'Rourke 16/12/2016 10:45:02**

I want to see the 8th amendment repealed because I think it's classist. The current situation simply outsources abortion to other countries, but only for those who can afford it. A crisis pregnancy is scary enough for someone without having to bring costs into the equation. Also, I have two close friends who both were raped - one was date-raped and the other at her brother's 21st by a friend of her brother's. Neither of them fell pregnant that I know of, but I'd like to think that the choice for them to not have to have their rapists' baby would have been there for them. Thanks for reading and for being a part of the assembly. Anna

**Ruth Manning 16/12/2016 10:49:34**

Dear Members of the Citizens Assembly,

I appeal to you to protect the 8th Amendment. Many people in Ireland are alive today because of it, therefore it is truly life-saving. As a society, we should be judged by our treatment of our most vulnerable members. A baby's heart beats at just 21 days. VHI Healthcare are currently running an advertisement for fertility services entitled "Let's talk about fertility". It is almost impossible nowadays to adopt a baby in Ireland but there are so many families who would so gladly adopt a baby born in Ireland. Promoting adoption instead of promoting abortion should be a cornerstone of any just society. Please, please, let us be proud and not apologetic that Ireland is abortion-free.

**Gary Sheridan 16/12/2016 11:02:11**

I want women to have complete control over their own bodies, and to have free will. This is fucking ridiculous that this is still going on, and the people that keep stamping it down should be ashamed of themselves.

**Helen Redmond 16/12/2016 11:23:08**

Having had difficulty conceiving and gone through 9 fertility treatments myself I am very much of the opinion that everyone has the right of choice. I strongly feel that we need to repeal the 8th amendment and sooner rather than later.

**Sarah O'Driscoll 16/12/2016 11:33:30**

As many of my fellow citizens and the coalition to repeal the 8th have stated a constitution is no place for reproductive healthcare policy. When our constitution gives an embryo or fetus the right to life it diminishes the rights of women in this state. By having this law enshrined in our constitution Ireland sends a message to all the women within its borders that their rights, their needs, and their bodily autonomy are not respected by the Irish Government or the Irish State. It is imperative that the assembly recommend that a referendum be called on the issue of removing the 8th amendment from Bunreacht na hÉireann.

**Catherine Johnson 16/12/2016 12:03:23**

I am an Irish college student, aged 20. I believe it is important for us to protect the 8th Amendment. Ireland currently has a system which does its best to look after both mother and baby involved in a pregnancy and I think it important that it remain as such. I understand that becoming pregnant when it is undesired or worse, traumatic scenarios that have brought about the pregnancy that it can be extremely stressful and potentially a painful situation for the woman. I deeply sympathize with women who find themselves in such situations, however I also deeply sympathize with the child in the womb who is completely innocent in the situation. Our goal in health care should be to strive to save as many lives as possible. I believe that repealing the 8th Amendment would not help in

achieving this goal, in fact I think it would bring us further from it. There's a lot of talk about the woman's right to choose surrounding this debate. And I agree that the right to choose is an important one that all humans should have. However, I think every human's right to life is just as important, or perhaps more important, as if we are declined the right to life, our other rights don't have the chance to come in to play. I believe in the equality of all human beings and so in this issue I think we should consider both the mother and the unborn child with complete equality. I don't want either to die or either to suffer and obviously there are some really tough situations in which only one life can be saved, and in those times tough decisions have to be made. But that doesn't change the fact that we in Ireland should continue to strive to save all lives and support the lives of those who experience tribulation. I think the 8th Amendment helps us to do that, and to repeal it would be back tracking. If I were to fall pregnant under unforeseen, unfortunate or painful circumstances of course I'd want my voice, my concerns and my hardships to be acknowledged, heard and considered. But equally, if I were to have been conceived under unforeseen, unfortunate or painful circumstances I'd want my voice, my concerns and my hardships to be acknowledged, heard and considered. I believe the 8th Amendment considers both these people - the pregnant woman and the conceived child. And I believe to repeal the 8th Amendment would be to disregard one of these two people. And that is an injustice toward whichever one is selected to be disregarded.

**Frances Kennedy 16/12/2016 12:03:33**

The eight amendment is the only protection a foetus has to a right to life. Please protect our future children. Let's keep our morality and humanity to care for the vulnerable in this case unborn babies. Think ahead to what the future will be if this is changed.

**Anne Iurascu 16/12/2016 12:27:38**

Dear fellow citizens,

The right to life is non-negotiable. The 8th amendment is nothing to do with controlling women's reproductive rights, it's about a far more fundamental right. There are two heartbeats involved from day 21!! Any tolerance for disregarding life will lead to the devaluing of life and will lead to certain lives deemed as not as valuable and not worth entertaining. Is this the route we want to take. No citizens assembly, no government, no vote, no number of millennia, can change this right to life from conception to natural death. Should we allow mutilation of female genitalia, or polygamy too if the powers that be or Amnesty decide that there is a Human Right to these things?! No, it's absurd. Abuse of children and destruction of life in the womb is wrong, has always been wrong and will always be wrong. I ask the assembly to recommend all support necessary to aid women who find themselves in extremely difficult pregnancies. I also ask the Assembly to consider examples of survivors of abortions.... The 8th Amendment has been shown to have saved thousands of lives. Let's be courageous and save lives and save the 8th. Thank you, Anne Iurascu.

**Cathleen Shortall 16/12/2016 12:30:28**

The Citizens Assembly has been asked to consider a referendum to repeal the right to life of the unborn child as protected under the 8th amendment to the Constitution . As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

The 8th Amendment guarantees the equal right to life of both women and their unborn children. It ensures the protection of the most basic human rights. Science tells us that preborn babies are human beings and therefore deserve the same protection that all humans enjoy. At 21 days gestation, our hearts are already beating. Every abortion ends a human life. Top medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013 that no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our prolife laws. Our maternity mortality rates remain the lowest in the world. A 2008 study (Ferguson et al) found that post-abortive women are 30% more likely to experience serious mental health problems, while a 2006 study (Gissler et al) found that the suicide rate for post-abortive women was six times higher than women who had given birth. Abortred children are dismembered and removed piece by piece or given a lethal injection directly into their hearts. This practice is both medieval and barbaric.

Because of our law, babies with disabilities and severe life-limiting conditions are guaranteed the same protection as every other child. While abortion activists treat these children as if they were already dead, the fact is that most babies, even the most severe cases, live after birth, and their famillies find their time together enormously healing. Ireland has a proud history of standing up for human rights and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. I urge you to consider this carefully and to remember that a society is judged on how it treats its most vulnerable members, human and non-human.

**Sarah McHugh 16/12/2016 12:37:51**

Do not stigmatise the women of our country anymore. I have the right to decide what happens to my own body. Repeal the 8th.

**Irene Maguire individual 16/12/2016 12:38:21**

Leave this amendment in place. More work needs to be done socially, medically and legally ensuring that the human rights of mother and baby are sufficiently safeguarded and any conflicts that may arise are sufficiently thought through.

**Susan Grant 16/12/2016 12:40:14**

Irish women should have the right to make decisions regarding their own bodies and health. I support the repeal of the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution.

**Laura Costello N/A 16/12/2016 12:41:53**

Repeal the 8th. This is a human rights violation. Women deserve to be treated equally under Irish law.

**Louisa Carroll 16/12/2016 13:14:40**

Repeal the 8th. It is essential that women have a right to decide what happens to their bodies/mental health/ livelihood. As a mother myself, I am fully aware of the joys and complexities of the process and development of having children. I would wholly support a women's right to choose as only she can know the full circumstances in which a child would be raised into. I have full confidence in women to make informed decisions.

**Caitriona 16/12/2016 13:17:43**

I have decided to write my thoughts, because I believe in the right to choose and I also believe that a woman's right to that decision should not be in anyone else's hands.

I am sure my story is similar to many others, in that I travelled to the UK for an abortion over one year ago.

I am in a very loving relationship and we had a baby boy 3 years ago. I can honestly say he is the best part of my life and I love him unconditionally, in fact I do not know what my life was like before he arrived. But when I discovered that I was pregnant again, 2 years later, I instantly knew that it was not the right time.

Some people may call me selfish but physically and emotionally I was not ready. I had been back in work 4 months, after a 2 year break. I felt my body was coming back and I started to feel like my old self. We were planning on relocating and financially we would have been stretched, even if you do always find a way to manage.

I felt guilty for even having the thought of an abortion as I love children and hope to have more in the future. I was trying to reason with myself and convince myself that I could do it and I would get over the initial feelings but I didn't. Both my partner and I talked at length at what we should do but both of us decided that it was the right thing for us. Travelling over to the UK, arranging someone to look after our child, keeping it private and financially covering the cost was an unnecessary process and a stressful one.

I do not view this as 'do you support/do you not support abortion' ... appealing this amendment is about giving you autonomy over your body and the RIGHT TO CHOOSE. As I said, that right should be in nobody else's hands by ours.

**Alan Eustace 16/12/2016 13:20:16**

I strongly believe that the women of Ireland deserve an equal right to health and this includes their reproductive rights. It is my opinion that article 40.3.3 should be removed from the constitution. Ireland remains one of the only countries in the developed world that criminalises termination of pregnancy. As such, we are completely out of step with the norms of other modern societies.

**Claire Brophy 16/12/2016 13:35:18**

Dear Citizens' Assembly members,

I'll keep this as short as possible, partly because of the volume of submissions you have received, and partly because I'm just exhausted. It's an uphill struggle to battle for a human right that you hope you'll never need to invoke.

Abortion should be available here so that the people who might need it can make that moral decision for themselves. It's hard to argue a hypothetical, because it's nearly impossible to imagine. No-one imagines themselves in A&E on Christmas day either, but it could be any of us.

If it seems like a major moral choice for you to recommend a referendum- then stop. It's out of your control already. People who need them will have them with or without your ok. What this will decide is: can they visit a clinic or hospital near their home, maybe with a family member or friend, or do they have to be exiled to another country for a few days, isolated and usually forced to lie? Can they take the pills at home knowing they can visit a hospital if something feels wrong, or do they have to bear it in silence for fear of 14 years in prison?

Rest assured that the moral decision of abortion is out of your hands. Please, please ask the government to call a referendum, because it's the only way to resolve this either way. It's been so long now that all we can do is put the question to the people, and listen to what they say. And if one side of the debate is asking for a referendum more than the other, think about that. One side is asking for a conversation, for the question to be asked democratically, and the other is trying to smother it. To deny us a referendum is to deny us the conversation.

This can't continue. Please, ask for a referendum, and let people decide for themselves.

Thank you.

**Melanie Bradley 16/12/2016 13:38:09**

I believe that women should have access to her own body in the fullest capacity. Which includes full reproductive rights. She should have the ability to dictate what maternity care she receives, should she wish to have a child. Equally, if she chooses not to have a child, then full access to safe and legal abortions should be made available. Not only in special life-threatening cases or horrendous circumstances, but by choice. This is not a matter of morality. It is a matter of autonomy and equality.

**Tetyana Kulykivska 16/12/2016 13:45:40**

I would like to see the Eight Amendment of the Constitution being protected and not changed. I believe it is a right choice for Ireland.

**Siobhan Abrook 16/12/2016 13:48:25**

It's not much to ask, another option to the unexpected (whether it's unplanned pregnancy or just extremely unlucky that it's not a viable pregnancy etc). The choice should not be forced upon a woman by government / law. it should be hers to make without having to leave the country to go to the UK.

A choice / option, it's not much to ask

**Joe 16/12/2016 13:49:52**

Save lives

**G Packham 16/12/2016 13:53:17**

Our family has been directly effected by the Eight Amendment of the Constitution and it has violated our human rights. We made the very difficult choice as well as costly journey to the U.K. for an abortion due to a fatal fetal abnormality diagnosis with no chance of survival. We had to leave the support of our families. We had to go through a horrific journey, my wife bleeding heavily while we waited around a foreign city and queued for hours at an airport. We should have been able to stay in our own country, in our own hospital, have access to abortion, be with our family, mourn and recover in our own home, not travel across the Irish Sea. We like many others who have travelled before and after will never forget this journey. It's now 2016 and these unnecessary journeys still continue to happen every day. We don't want any more citizens to have to go through this unnecessary journey. We feel that no woman no matter what reasons she has to seek an abortion and health care services should have to leave this country. Our legislators must address this indefensible situation; a referendum to repeal not replace the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution of Ireland must take place without delay. Our legislators must address this indefensible situation; a referendum to repeal not replace the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution of Ireland must take place without delay.

**Sevenne O'Rourke 16/12/2016 13:56:54**

I believe we need to repeal the 8th because making abortion illegal isn't stopping women from having abortions but instead funding backstreet abortionists and encouraging women who cannot afford or perhaps are too young to make the trip to England to attempt self termination.

**Matt 16/12/2016 13:59:55**

Save lives

**Gerry Jennings 16/12/2016 14:00:56**

I find it very strange that there is a large majority in Dáil Éireann who wish to insert an amendment to our Constitution to protect ownership of Irish Water because they don't trust our legislators to keep it in public ownership yet these very same people are willing to

trust that our legislators can be trusted to protect our unborn children through legislation. Bizarre!!!!. If we can't trust them with Irish Water we certainly can't trust them with the lives of innocent unborn children. Please retain the Eight Amendment as it stands.

**Geraldine Morris 16/12/2016 14:08:37**

I am not affiliated to any group but I feel I should stand up and be counted in the abortion discussion. I am an Irish national who travel abroad but came home to Ireland because I thought that Ireland had a good balance of protecting the life of mother and baby.

I am concerned at the abortion agenda being pushed in Ireland today so much so that people are reluctant to express their opinion against abortion resulting in society becoming desensitised to abortion without investigating what happens during the procedure, knowledge which is necessary to make an informed decision.

The arguments put forward for abortion are:

It's a women's choice

If so what becomes of the father's choice and who speaks for the baby's choice?

It's the woman's body

If so then why is it the baby's body that is destroyed?

Women are going to England for abortion.

Just because women are going to England for abortions does not mean it is right two wrongs do not make a right.

It is ok in cases of disabilities.

Is it not how we treat the most vulnerable in society that is a reflection of how we are as a people?

We need to ask the question in the case of fatal fetal abnormalities why one couple can get such comfort from holding their child even for a few minutes and why another couple feels their only alternative is to go to England for an abortion. Either way it must be a harrowing decision to have to make.

It is ok in cases of rape

In rape cases there have been studies of those who chose to have their babies and those who decided on abortion. It was found that those who chose to have their babies felt that something good came from something bad will those who opted for abortion suffered mentally as a result.



Abortion is not just a woman's issue it affects the woman, the father, the family, the doctor performing the procedure and it has an effect on society as a whole.

I have known a woman who had an abortion 20 years ago and said that on the date her child would have been born every year she dreams that she can hear her baby crying.

I know two women who had abortions and were suicidal after and within six months were deliberately pregnant to try and replace the baby they lost. I have seen families torn apart by abortion and as a society how can we expect future generations to have respect for human life if we are advocating for abortion.

We need to ask who is pushing this agenda?

We need to educate the young to appreciate life.

We also need to realise the power of words, we can use foetus or unborn baby. I ask you which of those labels are the most dehumanising. Perhaps we should leave that out of our vocabulary and stick with unborn baby.

Eight Amendment? Yes

**Seamus Mulconry na 16/12/2016 14:08:49**

To whom it may concern,

I was born in 1965 as the result of an unwanted pregnancy. I believe but do not know for sure that I was born in a mother and baby home and that my adoption was arranged by Sister Hildegard who later featured in Philomena.

I was lucky enough to be adopted by two wonderful parents who gave me every opportunity that hard work could provide and care of a loving home. I had a very happy childhood, never wanted for anything either material or emotional.

I went to College as a mature student got a First in History and English, did an MBA and have worked in variety of interesting roles and had the opportunity to make some small contribution to the common good.

I married a girl I met in college and we have two healthy talented (if not always well behaved children) who contributed to both my hair loss and my happiness.

I am making this submission to point out that these of us who are the result of an unwanted pregnancy, are not always unwanted, and given the chance to be born we can have happy fulfilled lives.

Much has been written of the high mortality rates in Mother and Baby homes but I would take the odds there any day compared to the odds of surviving an abortion.

I am very grateful for the gift of life. I have known what is to love another and be loved, to see my sons grow to self awareness and become good kids. I have travelled, seen the sun rise of the Bosphorus and the moon rise over Taskent, drank Tokay in Budapest and hot tea on the summit of Croagh Patrick, and I hope still have a lot of living to do.

Repealing the Eight will be a death sentence for people like me and frankly life is so good and so wonderful it deserves to be shared not extinguished.

To these who argue that a fetus is not a human being - I saw the scan of my son in the womb he was sucking his thumb- he still does that when he is tired. He was my son in the womb not a collection of cells.

I am a private person with no desire to share the details of my life with anyone but my family but I cannot stand silent while people purpose legislation which will lead to the death of the innocent. The death of people just like me who deserve to have the same chance to live, love and pass on the gift of life.

Thank you

**Eileen Aiken 23/11/2016 21:04:51**

i am horrified to imagine that any person could think of killing unborn babies as life is so precious.

**Brigid Dolan Trinity College Dublin 16/12/2016 14:28:30**

The Catholic Church, once upon a time, had powerful influence on the Irish psyche. Today however, this is no longer the case. I am not a religious person but I respect people's right to chose their own beliefs. Please grant me this same right.

Placing women at risk, be it mental or physical, is inexcusable.

**Bridget Deevy 16/12/2016 14:37:13**

This topic is often dismissed as being 'emotive', as if to have a strong emotional response to something is wrong. Men's bodies are and always will be autonomous. Men can be assaulted of course, but the result of that assault will never be a 9 month gestation period of another human life that they have not chosen, that will forever change the path of their lives, that will make them relive the trauma endured, that is a product of violence and oppression, that may endanger their own lives by virtue of the act of forced childbirth or indeed through the mental health implications. What about a woman's right to choose her own life, her own destiny and not have her body used against her will? This is what the 8th amendment does, it takes away a woman's human right to protect her own body and have autonomy over it. But this is not just a human rights issue, this is a class issue in Ireland, it is a poverty issue and an issue that disproportionately affects marginalised communities. The fact remains that 11 women travel daily to the UK for abortions, so we have abortion in Ireland. We are ok with that idea. Most people when faced with their daughter or sister

with an tough choice, they will support them in going to England. They will lend them money, they will help them make plans, they will mind their children, they will cover up for them. So abortion is available and accessible to those who can afford it in Ireland, if you come from a certain class. If you don't, you are forced to get a loan you can't afford, go to a money lender, have a backstreet abortion or ultimately a baby that you are not able to cope with. This injustice and national hypocrisy is upheld by the 8th amendment. It's time we grew up as a nation and faced up to the realities of what living in this society means. I believe in a woman's right to choose in all circumstances. Maybe the majority of people in Ireland don't. I think we need to have a reasoned debate about that, but the fact remains that active harm is being done to women because of the 8th. It needs to be repealed so women can have proper health care. It's time to stop being hypocrites, trust women and repeal.

**Fiona Howley 16/12/2016 14:48:21**

Retain the 8th

**DAVID DONNELLY 16/12/2016 14:49:46**

To whom it may concern;

Please do not remove the protections afforded to the unborn children of Ireland under the 8th amendment of the Irish constitution.

David Donnelly.

**Deirdre Coyle 16/12/2016 14:54:46**

I am an Irish Citizen who has lived in multiple countries since turning 18. I love representing my country and hearing the lovely stories people have about their visits to Ireland but I am ashamed of certain elements of Irish Society and the 8th is first and foremost. We claim we are the most welcoming/friendly nation but we look the other way and send our vulnerable women away to take a responsible decision if they are incapable of raising a child. We turn our back on our own and do not provide women with the option to make a CHOICE that is wholly belonging to the parents of an unborn child. The way women who have abortions are forced to live in silence and the steps they have to take to access safe medical care is a disgrace and we should all be ashamed to be Irish in this regard. REPEAL THE 8TH NOW.

**Whitney Rowe Personal 16/12/2016 15:00:00**

Its time Ireland treated women like free and equal citizens and allowed them to take care of their own bodies. Women should have the right to choose abortion if they find it necessary for their own health OR for the wellbeing of themselves and their families.

**Ruth Quinn 16/12/2016 15:12:01**

I believe that adoption should be promoted as an option for women to consider when faced with a crisis pregnancy. As an adoptive parent myself with two adopted children, I am so

happy that my children were born and myself and my husband are so honoured to be their parents. We are so grateful to their birth mothers for choosing life over abortion. Our lives have been transformed by our beautiful children and we cannot imagine life without them.

From a birth mothers point of view also, choosing adoption over abortion means that hope exists – birth mothers can have involvement with regards to the family they would like their child to be raised by and also the possibility of contact in the future. Whereas abortion is final, adoption is not. Where there is life there is hope and I believe that for many women, the potential regret which often underlies mood problems (which for many women is part of a psychological difficulty called Post Abortion Syndrome) is likely to be reduced. That is not to say that women do not experience regret after agreeing that their child should be adopted, but that at least a woman can feel that they chose what was best for their child, and there is a possibility of having a relationship with the child.

In Ireland there are thousands of couples who would love to adopt a child yet adoption is rarely promoted as an alternative for women to consider if faced by an unexpected pregnancy. I feel that this is something that needs to be addressed so that women do feel that they have other choices available and that abortion is not their only option.

**Maria Brennan Citizen 16/12/2016 15:24:27**

I am a 39 year old woman and have never been given the right to vote on this issue. We NEED a referendum now before more women have to suffer by travelling to other countries to access safe health care or another generation of girls and women have to live in a society where they are deemed incapable of deciding what happens to their bodies. Repeal the 8th Amendment or at least give the people of Ireland the opportunity to be heard.

**Joyce Duffy 16/12/2016 15:25:37**

As a female citizen of Ireland, I think we need to repeal the 8th. The life of the mother should be superior to that of the foetus. Keeping dead women alive artificially to support an unborn foetus is barbaric. Letting young mother's die for want of treatment is equally immoral. Repeal the 8th. Put women first. If men could bear children this would not even be an issue. I am in my 50's and have been asking for a referendum for 30 years. Now is the time. All the government cares about is votes. They certainly don't care about mothers.

**Eileen Murphy 16/12/2016 15:29:23**

I think the eight amendment should be repealed, that is my opinion as a citizen, which I want to see heard and addressed through the democratic process.

**Dara 16/12/2016 15:30:03**

I nearly lost my aunt when she had an ectopic pregnancy. She was bleeding heavily and the doctors sent her home because there was nothing that they could do because there was still 'growth' even though she was experiencing an ectopic pregnancy and was in severe pain. She went home and bled out so heavily that she had to be rushed into hospital. She nearly

died. This amendment needs to be appealed to stop these horrific events from happening. Life is too short, we only have one chance so why can't we decide how to live it. REPEAL THE 8TH

**Olwen Bourke 16/12/2016 15:31:14**

I want the 8th amendment to be repealed as it's inhumane. If men could get pregnant, abortion would have been legalised decades ago. Please trust women to know whether or not it's right for them to carry and give birth to a child.

**Roisin O'Neill Repeal Movement 16/12/2016 15:40:15**

As an Irish woman I find it deplorable that the women of Ireland are not given autonomy over their own bodies. It is a basic human right that is being denied. Women are finding themselves in desperate situations and they are being turned away by their own country when they look for help. We deserve the right to have a referendum on the 8th Amendment. Please give us the opportunity to have our voices heard. Please repeal the 8th Amendment.

**Caroline O'Leary 16/12/2016 15:41:38**

As a student doctor coming to the end of my training, who also has a degree and MSc in psychology, I strongly believe that attributing rights to a collection of cells that may have the potential for life, the same rights we give to living, breathing, existing humans, is practically and morally wrong, as well as being psychologically damaging to women.

The formation of a human embryo is an incredible thing (please do look it up if you never have) but it is so complex and miraculous that it is often imperfect. The list of possible complications is far too long to go into here but until 3-4 months gestation, the embryo cannot be perceived as anything beyond a potential for life. The human body itself is well aware of these potential abnormalities and when it detects something wrong, something that makes these cells incompatible with life, will often undergo spontaneous abortion - usually known as a miscarriage. This list also includes a number of horrendous abnormalities that mean that if the potential foetus does progress, its short survival outside the uterus will be painful, laboured and short.

The psychological damage to women of this attribution of life and rights - guilt at miscarriage, carrying a foetus to term that will live in pain and die quickly, not to mention the effect of being forced to carry a foetus they are unable to care for or that have been forced upon them, is enormous and currently entirely ignored in this country.

As the law stands, women's life and right to health is currently valued as secondary to a collection of cells she may carry inside her. Cancer is a growing bunch of cells too, it can even grow its own blood vessels and mask its presence, this doesn't mean it has the right to be 'alive'. For these reasons, and many more, I believe we must repeal the 8th Amendment.

**Gary Koh 16/12/2016 15:42:41**

The unborn child's right to life needs to be protected more than the adult's right to choose. Not all life choices are convenient and as adults, we are better equipped to live with and overcome life's consequences.

**Emma Downey 16/12/2016 15:46:55**

Exactly two years today, a clinically dead woman was kept alive to protect the rights of an unborn baby. Where, in this situation, were the rights of the woman?? Why are the rights of an unborn person greater than that of a living woman? We are not vessels to simply give birth, we are humans with human rights and need to be treated as such. We should have the right to decide what happens with our own bodies. Repeal the 8th

**Ronan Phelan 16/12/2016 16:09:37**

The 8th Amendment of the Constitution discriminates against all women living in Ireland. It violates their right to bodily integrity and self-determination. It creates a discriminatory health system where a pregnant woman has only qualified access to health care. It drives thousands of women each year to travel abroad to avail of abortions in the UK- and discriminates against those who cannot. Fundamentally it belies a distrust in women to make the right decisions for themselves and the society in which they live. It must be repealed.

**Bryan Johnson 16/12/2016 16:16:36**

My view on the matter is one based around free choice. Regardless of outcomes, prejudicial views, religious views, personal views. Choice, is the single greatest gift because it means options. And a world, or society in which one has options, is better than one in which there are none. Let us rid the current dichotomy.

**Michael Austin Grace Bible Church Courtown, Co. Wexford 24/11/2016 12:59:05**

Dear Members of the Citizens' Assembly

Since the foundation of the State, the Republic and our citizens has chosen to accept and respect that fundamental human rights apply to all human beings, regardless of status, race, creed, gender, ability, stage of development, environment or state of dependency.

The first five categories mentioned above are self-explanatory, however, the last three categories are not often quoted, please allow me to explain briefly:

1. Stage of development: Human beings' fundamental right to life exists as much for a newborn (early stage of development) as for a 35year old mature adult. The same applies for a fetus in very early stage of development.

2. Environment: Human beings' fundamental rights applies as much to members of an undiscovered tribe in the Amazon jungle as for someone living in a penthouse apartment in Dublin 2. The same applies to human beings in the environment of their mothers' womb.

3. Dependency: Whether a bed-ridden individual dependent on caring relatives, a breastfed baby dependent on mother's milk or a fetus fully dependent on mother's womb, all human rights apply equally to each individual person.

The one fundamental question that you as a member or the Citizen's Assembly are called on to decide is:

#### WHAT IS THE UNBORN?

Scientists (embryologists, obstetricians), philosophers and Christian theologians are all in agreement: Human life begins at conception. That is the action that creates a specific individual - directing his/her own development, owning his/her own unique DNA sequences - the unique and continuous individual that we all once were, presently is, and continues to be somewhere along the continuum of human life from unborn stage to eventual death. Clearly unborn babies are humans and clearly, fundamental human rights, including the right to life, applies to the unborn as much as to you and me.

Ireland has reached a very decisive point in her social and moral life - will the State continue to uphold the rights and protections due to the unborn person, or not?

As a 74 year-old father of five and grandfather of 8 children, with one further on the way, I have been deeply upset, only recently, to learn about some of the techniques used by abortionists - ( I am a retired engineer with a number of patents in the area of cardiology stents, and hold a PhD. Believe me, without being emotive, it is of great importance that you fully acquaint yourselves with the procedures used by abortionists and how such barbaric actions can ever be carried out in the name of civilised society. You owe it to the unborn to be familiar with what abortion means to THEM.

Please, I urge you to use all your influence to protect the unborn by retaining the 8th Amendment.

Very sincerely yours,

Name: Michael J. S. Austin Date: 24th Nov. 2016 Address: 129 Hazelwood, Gorey, Co. Wexford

**Stephen Moloney 16/12/2016 16:29:43**

Repeal the 8th, let women choose.

**PRINCE TOM 16/12/2016 16:29:56**

Each and every life is valuable from the time of conception to the last breath. It is totally wrong ending the life of a child in the womb. I would like to urge you not repeal the eight amendment

**Dáibhí Ó Naradhaigh Not applicable 16/12/2016 16:48:05**

Despite our failings, we humans have made tremendous progress since our time began.

We have explored and discovered and invented. We have come from the trees and the caves and gone to the moon and beyond.

Like plants and other animals, we survive and thrive by overcoming problems.

We should strive to overcome the problem of unwanted pregnancies by a better means than abortion.

If one suffered a serious leg injury one would not want the doctor to suggest a quick amputation. Guided by the motto "Where there's life, there's hope" one would ask for an alternative or a second opinion.

This submission will address two of the issues in the debate on abortion.

Fatal Foetal Abnormalities.

It is awful for an expectant mother to be told that her baby's chances of survival are slim or non-existent. But is abortion a solution to the problem? Would it not be better for the mother and father if the baby's limited time came to its natural end? Where there's life, there's hope. Even when hope is slim more positive outcomes are possible. In England recently a woman who knew her baby would die within hours of birth arranged for the donation of her baby's organs to other babies.

Some will say that time is precious and that the mother can't afford to wait and may even miss another chance of conceiving a healthy baby.

Sadly, life often involves waiting and missed opportunities.

Many have to wait for months or a year if they fail an exam.

Many miss out on promotion in work or wherever.

Many lose time and opportunities through injury or illness.

Rape.

Rape is awful.



Legal penalties for rapists should be more severe to reflect the brutality of the crime.

Efforts to ease the difficulties of giving evidence in rape trials should continue.

Despite the awfulness of rape allowing for legal abortions in the case of rape is not a humane solution to the problem. "Two wrongs don't make a right." Indeed, given the time it takes to secure rape convictions, is it a practical suggestion?

A woman who becomes pregnant following what she considers to be rape should be given official support to bring her baby to term.

After birth the mother should have a veto on the parenting of the child.

The father of a child conceived by rape should be legally prohibited from any decisions concerning the child. Inheritance liabilities should apply.

Allowing abortion in the case of rape would doom the unborn baby to a death sentence.

Conclusion.

Most of us disagree with cruelty to animals. We protest at using animals for testing chemicals and we oppose bull fighting and hare coursing.

Yet some of us do not extend our compassion to unborn children.

Some link abortion to "the right to choose". Every chosen law limits choice.

People should have the right to choose. Choose Life.

Thank you to all ninety nine members of the Citizens' Assembly for your work on this urgent matter.

**eoin lane Artist, Writer, Retailer 16/12/2016 16:48:44**

Saving the unborn is something tremendous, humane, compassionate, logical and just in a society that fought to attain freedom for all Irishmen and Irish women 100 years ago. And that includes the unborn Irish citizens who are at risk of being killed by their own tribe. I am an artist and a writer and I say with my own voice not as a member of any group, political religious or otherwise but as an individual - we must not allow the 8th to be lost. Lives must be saved. Let's start at home.

**Aidan Hocking 16/12/2016 16:49:37**

I am a soon-to-be Irish passport holder living in the UK, with a lot of relatives currently living in the Republic. Current abortion law incentivises dangerous and illegal medical practices among those lacking the resources to travel to the UK and violates a woman's bodily autonomy. Huge steps have been made towards social liberalisation in recent years and hope that process is continued by reforming abortion law.

**GILLIAN MCDONAGH n/a 16/12/2016 16:50:17**

I believe the 8th amendment should be repealed in order to respect and protect the lives, health and choices of women in Ireland. To stop 10 women and girls leaving Ireland everyday for a medical procedure that should be available here. To stop discriminating against women and girls who cannot travel. To stop criminalizing women for deciding on abortions or the abortion pill. To stop violating international human rights standards on women's rights. To reflect on contemporary public opinion. Repeal.

**Mark Ferris 16/12/2016 16:50:45**

I strongly feel as a grieving father that the eight amendment should be retained. The unborn child cannot be written off as just a "clump of cells". A baby's heart beats just 21 days after conception (possibly even as early as 16 days). By week 11, there has been so much development

We need to acknowledge this humanity and recognise the fact that this tiny human being needs to be protected by our laws just like every other member of Irish society.

Once abortion is legalised, it becomes impossible to restrict. This is very clear when you look at other countries. In England and Wales, abortion was introduced in 1967 on supposedly "restrictive grounds". Today, 1 in every 5 pregnancies ends in abortion in England and Wales.

My child died six days after birth prior to Christmas 2012, at no stage did I or anyone of the professional staff expect what was to happen to my baby. However these six days were the only days I had with my first born and I treasure them dearly. Should abortion be legalised fathers/mothers who have been told that their baby will not have a great chance of survival will possibly lose this precious experience on the advice of a professional. It's with this experience I honestly feel that the eight amendment should stand and allow all babies who may be diagnosed with difficulties have the right to life no matter how short it is. A loving father.

**Siobhan Gallagher 16/12/2016 16:51:30**

I am one of the thousands of woman who has traveled to the UK for a termination 14 years ago. I have been made feel ashamed, shunned and abandoned by my country. I am not ashamed. I made the right decision for myself, for the unborn, and for society as a whole. I had no way to support myself or a child. Our government are happy to sit back and ignore a major women's rights issue and bury their heads in the sand. I want autonomy over my body and be trusted to make a choice about my future and my life. I was 18 and in an abusive relationship when I fell pregnant. Thankfully I was able to seek help from a family member to travel. The travel was the worst part of the procedure. The loneliness and isolation and feeling of sneaking away. As a result of making that hardest decision of my life (and the right one) I am out of that relationship and am an educated, informed member of society in a loving relationship and in a position to now make an informed decision about a

family. It is not trust upon me - unwilling. Please stop these human rights violations and repeal the eighth now.

**Clare Kavanagh Mother of 2 daughters 16/12/2016 16:53:19**

I demand dominion over my own body. I demand it for my young daughters. Men have full rights over their own bodies, women deserve nothing less than the same. Abortion is a healthcare issue, it is up to each individual woman and no one else. Full abortion, on demand, to all Irish women. Anything else is oppression of women. I am more important than a zygote. Repeal the 8th amendment. Full abortion on demand. Grow up Ireland. Women's bodies, women's choice.

**Christian Brady 16/12/2016 16:54:03**

My partner is not a second class citizen but our current laws treat her as one. The overwhelming majority of people in Ireland wish to see this clause removed from the Constitution. We would like the chance to Repeal the 8th amendment. Women need access to healthcare in Ireland like they have in most other countries. It is so old fashioned and unfair as it stands.

**Elle Maher Humanity 16/12/2016 16:55:40**

Hi,

Given much recent public comment regarding equality in Ireland for minorities and others, surely the ultimate equality is that of the EQUAL right to life of an unborn child.

My own situation is that I am one of six children. My wonderful mother often comments now that, she and we, are lucky to be alive today, given the rush to abort populations of unborn children in today's world. Mam explains that she was adopted at 3 months old in 1964, her mother in West Limerick could not keep her. Had there been abortion available then, she may have never lived, she would never have met my great Dad, and the six of us, including me, would not exist. Mam says that had it been the UK or USA, she may have been killed, aborted. This is a shocking thought, and makes me feel sad and angry, that this could have happened to our Mam. We can not imagine how our life would be without her, a loving, giving woman who has given birth herself to six of us. As she says herself, who are we to deny the equal right to life of any unborn child.

And that is what the 8th amendment states, an equal right to life of the mother, and the unborn child. What could be more EQUAL than this, in this world today of so-called, EQUALITY.

I am in favour of retaining the 8th amendment, because it aims to protect that minority (the vulnerable unborn children) that are consistently under attack now, from those who want the absurd choice of killing them, denying them that equal right to life. I favour the philosophy of live, and let live, therefore give life a chance.

In cases of dangers to the life of the mother, I am happy to leave those rare, difficult, necessary decisions in the hands of ethical, responsible, professional medical practitioners in Ireland. Otherwise, give life a chance, even when the situation appears futile on the surface. Life, and the urge to live is powerful, and must be respected, if this truly is a civilised world.

Elle Maher, South Circular Road, Dolphins Barn, Dublin 8.

**Heather Browning 16/12/2016 16:56:11**

I am writing to ask that you please think about how important it is to repeal the eight amendment. Women living in Ireland deserve to have the ability to choose what is right for them. They do not deserve to feel shamed; to feel like they have no say in what is right for their bodies; to be forced to spend time and money trying to access basic healthcare that they can only get when they go abroad. To me, repealing the eight amendment means giving women the freedom to choose what happens to their bodies. I am a young woman of child-bearing age, and I want to be respected in my country and know that whatever decision I make if I get pregnant is my decision. Women continue to be confronted with extremely difficult circumstances every day in this country because they are forced to be silent about their abortions. The fact is that abortions happen, and they have always happened. The problem is that the eight amendment makes it unsafe for women to have abortions. Abortion should be a choice; motherhood should be a choice. We cannot afford to let women suffer. We must act. I am asking you to please think about the emotional, physical and economic cost that is being imposed on Irish women because of the eight amendment. It is fundamentally dangerous to have this in our constitution. Women have died and women will continue to die. Think of Savita and please make the recommendation to hold a referendum on the eight amendment. Thank you for your time. Heather Browning

**Ivor Bateman 16/12/2016 16:57:07**

To the Members of the Citizen's Assembly,

I firmly believe God is the creator of this world and He is the one who gives life. He is the One who should decide when a life ends. This is not a responsibility for human beings to take on.

We know, from the point of conception, a new life is forming. We also all know the devastation and grief experienced by people due to miscarriage because a precious little life has been lost. It is the same sadness and grief we experience at the graveside of a loved one who had the privilege of being born. The baby inside the womb has the same right to life that you or I do. No human being has the right to end the life of another.

Abortion is being pushed forward particularly in the case of a diagnosis of a sick or disabled baby in the womb. Could we provide support and services to help families in these very difficult situations rather than making the traumatic decision to end a life. In other countries abortion has been introduced on a restrictive basis but, over the course of time, those

restrictions have been lifted. To hear that in England and Wales today abortion is available right up to birth if the baby is diagnosed with even a minor disability is a terrible tragedy.

Please also take into consideration the erosion of moral values in society today. The act of sexual intercourse deserves its God-given value and respect. It is designed to enhance marital relationship and allow for the pro-creation of children within a loving marriage. The repeal of the Eighth Amendment would be a means of allowing sexual permissiveness without accountability. The acceptance of abortion would in effect emotionally destroy any individual involved and so, to protect our society, please do not recommend a referendum on this matter.

The Eighth Amendment has already saved so many lives and we should be thankful that our country respects the right to life of the unborn.

Yours Faithfully, Ivor Bateman

**Gerardine Jones 16/12/2016 16:58:55**

I understand that we, as a nation, are discussing removing the 8th Amendment, which enshrines in our constitution the equal right to life of both mother and baby. What I don't understand is why. Since 1983, with vast improvements in technology, we know without doubt that the unborn child is, from the very beginning, a unique and irreplaceable human being, differing from the rest of us only in size and location. Our improved knowledge of the development of the unborn baby is well documented with new discoveries being made constantly and I'm sure you have received submissions to this effect from many people qualified in this area. It would seem logical therefore that in Ireland today our respect for the dignity of each unborn baby's life would have increased accordingly, but instead we are discussing removing that right in certain circumstances. I believe that these circumstances are irrelevant – either the taking of an innocent human life is justifiable in all circumstances or none at all.

Once we begin to categorise some people as being unworthy of the right to life, history has shown that this is the first step on the road to genocide. Can we really justify targeting our weakest and most vulnerable citizens with a death sentence because they are sick or inconvenient or for committing the mere crime of having a rapist for a father, and still point our finger at those who felt justified in their treatment of the Jews during WWII?

Abortion kills an estimated 44 million children every year, and in the UK, where abortion was introduced in 'restrictive' circumstances similar to our own legislation in 2013, abortions are justified for conditions such as Down's Syndrome or for very manageable health defects, or in some cases simply because the child is girl, but mostly because the baby is inconvenient.

Are we now saying to families expecting children who may have limited lives that their children's lives are meaningless and that we believe abortion is an appropriate response to their need for care and support?

In the case of rape, we are dealing with 2 victims, a traumatised woman and her vulnerable child. If we feel that the death penalty is too severe for the rapist, then why is it permissible for one of his victims? If we really care about the woman in this horrific situation, why are we not discussing improving the legal system which often makes her feel like she's on trial or discussing putting real support systems in place to help her to deal with the ordeal?

In 2013 the Senate discussed the proposed abortion legislation. Senator Walsh read a medical description of the dismembering of an unborn child in the abortion procedure. Some senators expressed extreme disgust at having to listen to this, but yet were entirely comfortable with voting for the procedure to be performed on unborn children. Do we really want to have an open and honest discussion on abortion?

**Rebecca 16/12/2016 16:59:27**

For any woman who has had to leave her home, her family and her country behind to seek medical care abroad, we need to Repeal. For any woman who was forced to carry her rapist's baby to term and give birth, we need to Repeal. For the mothers and fathers who receive an FFA diagnosis and are faced with carrying their dying child to term or spend thousands to travel to terminate, we need to Repeal. For every person who is just not ready to become a parent, we need to Repeal. We need to ensure women can access the same level of reproductive healthcare as they can abroad. We need to make sure our daughters, our mothers, our aunts and sisters have access to safe and legal abortions. We need to ensure that people's opinions on healthcare do not shape the healthcare this country provides. Listen to doctors, listen to the women affected, listen to experts. Help us.

**Kate Mooney Private Citizen 24/11/2016 23:01:01**

You have been tasked with discussing my health and well being. You have the opportunity to recommend the type and quality of health care that is provided to me and every woman in this country. Your duty is to consider the needs of every woman in this country - and that includes the 12 women who leave Ireland today to get an abortion. And the 12 who will leave tomorrow, and the next day, and the next, and every day until the 8th amendment is repealed. So many problems arise from the 8th amendment, it can be hard to know where to start, so let me explain my own limited experience of its effects. I am pregnant at the moment, after suffering a miscarriage earlier this year. I suffered for weeks at that time because I was not afforded any choice or treatment while I miscarried. But for the 8th amendment, I could have chosen to take medication on the day I found out that my pregnancy had not continued. I could have chosen to go through this harrowing experience at a time of my choosing, in the comfort of my own home, with my loving partner beside me. Instead I bled every day, for nearly three weeks, exhausted, unable to move from the couch every evening. Going to work everyday wondering when and where I'd be when it

happened? what would happen? what would it be like? would I get to the bathroom on time? As it turned out it happened on my last day of school, on a school trip in another county, where I spent the day bent double at the back of the bus trying to hide the crippling agony that came out of nowhere that day. I eventually made it home where I spent the night on the bathroom floor - three weeks after hearing the bad news. Instead of going through this trauma in my own time, at my own pace, with medical treatment, I was left at the mercy of nature for no other reason than the 8th amendment and it's required medical practices. I am now happily 11 weeks pregnant again. Yet the 8th amendment hangs over my head every minute, if I get sick, if something is wrong with my baby, if my labour does not go to plan I can do nothing, I have no voice, no choice in my medical care - because of the 8th amendment. And I want this baby. Pregnancy is hard. It is physically and emotionally draining, it is scary and I can only imagine the torture an unwanted pregnancy might feel like. I am willing to go through this hardship because I want a baby. The idea of being forced to go through this, being forced to become a parent is unimaginable to me. I believe being a parent is one of the most important jobs a person can do and no one should go into it unwillingly. It is not good for the woman, nor her child, if she is forced into remaining pregnant or becoming a mother. The 8th amendment is dangerous, it is unfair, and barbaric. Please trust the women of this country - your sister, your daughter, your mother, your boss, your friend. Allow her the freedom to do what she needs to do. Recommend a referendum to Repeal the 8th.

**Bridie Mccourt 25/11/2016 09:46:19**

Why as a nation are we not happy to think for ourselves but we feel every other country knows better than us. We have a great maternity service where a pregnant mother will be treated though this may lead to the loss of the child. We need nothing more. Abortion is a violation of the human right of the child and is nothing but savagery and if we bring this in it will be the beginning of the end for our country.

**Fionnuala O'Reilly 25/11/2016 15:28:12**

Members of the Citizen's Assembly,

The Citizens' Assembly has been asked to consider a referendum to repeal the right to life of the unborn child as protected under the 8th amendment to the Constitution. As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

The 8th amendment guarantees the equal right to life of both women and their unborn children. The 8th was approved by the people in 1983 and, since that time, has saved an estimated 250,000 lives because our abortion rate has remained much lower than that of countries with legalised abortion. In Britain for example, one in every five babies is killed by abortion. In Ireland that figure is one in every twenty. If we had Britain's abortion rate we would see 10,000 more abortions every year – or 30 more every day. No reasonable person would welcome more abortions.

The 8th amendment is a piece of legislation that ensures the protection of the most basic human rights. Science tells us that preborn babies are human beings and deserving of the protection of society. At 21 days gestation, our hearts are already beating. Every abortion ends a human life.

The 8th amendment protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. In fact, as top medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.

Abortion also hurts women. A 2008 study (Fergusson et al) found that post-abortive women are 30% more likely to experience serious mental health problems while a 2006 study (Gissler et al) found that the suicide rate for post-abortive women was six times higher than women who had given birth.

Abortion not only has negative effects on women, but it is also a cruel and inhumane practice towards the unborn. These children are dismembered and removed piece by piece or given a lethal injection directly into their hearts. This practice is both medieval and barbaric.

Because of our law, the equal right to life of babies with disabilities and severe life limiting conditions are guaranteed the same protections as every other child. While abortion activists treat these children as if they were already dead, the fact is that most babies, even the most severe cases, live after birth and their families find their time together enormously healing. Parents of these babies recognize their children's lives as precious and say that improved perinatal hospice care, not abortion, is what they need.

Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. I urge you to consider this carefully and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

Please protect that 8th amendment.

Thank you.

**Michelle Callaghan 25/11/2016 15:44:38**

In my opinion the women of Ireland are treated as second class citizens due to the 8th Amendment. A woman should have full autonomy over her body. At present Irish women are forced to travel to Great Britain and beyond to avail of abortion. The reason for the abortion should be confidential between a woman and her doctor and it is not ethical for any other Irish person to deny a woman full bodily autonomy. It is time for the Irish Government to legislate for abortion in the Irish Republic and to stop pretending that a) it's not happening b) a foetus should have equal rights to a girl/ woman.



**Fintan Moore 25/11/2016 20:04:32**

Please see enclosed.

**Thomas Nolan Foxrock Parish 25/11/2016 23:28:09**

We would like to send our best wishes to the Citizens Assembly and hope its deliberations are reflective of the feelings of the whole nation. Personally we have regarded the Eight Amendment of the Constitution as a remarkable statement of the Irish people in terms of the protection of new life. As parents of five children - one sadly deceased through suicide - we are only too well aware of the trials and tribulations that can result from unplanned pregnancies. Yet we have been unable to support any action which would result in the death of an innocent unborn. Hard cases should not dictate the law of the land. The Common Good and protections that recognise the fragility of life must take precedence. Any weakening of this protection means that innocent life will be taken in our names. Slavery was once the norm, but now it is abhorrent to all. Is it likely that abortion will be similarly viewed in the future ?

No country has succeeded in introducing "a little" abortion. Invariable the criteria are expanded and it quickly becomes the ultimate contraceptive. Let us continue to show the world that it is possible to retain respect for human life at all stages and by our example turn the tide throughout the world. Tom and Betty Nolan

**Hugh Byrne 26/11/2016 16:22:33**

Given the discussion on repealing the 8th amendment, it intrigues me that society views our DNA as the unique descriptor of our individual identity using it to formally identify any given individual. A developing foetus contains a unique DNA sequence which identifies it as a unique human being. Do we have the right to deny this individual the most basic right - that to life. Additionally it has become clear that abortion in many jurisdictions has become nothing more than a method of birth control for individuals who do not wish to be held responsible for the consequences of their own actions and choices; or a method of eugenics removing classes of people from our society - most recently highlighted by people with Down's syndrome.

# **Annex to Online Submissions**



## **Unite Submission to the Citizens' Assembly in respect of the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution**

### **The right to choose is a trade union issue**

Unite welcomes the opportunity to make this Submission to the Citizens' Assembly. We are available to make an oral presentation to the Assembly reflecting the particular perspective of women workers, and of many Unite members, on this issue.

With over 1.4 million members in Great Britain and Ireland, and over 35,000 members, 10,000 of whom are women, in the Republic of Ireland, Unite is a strong voice for workers' rights and equality. Our pro-choice stance goes back many years, and was most recently affirmed at the union's 2010 Policy Conference. In 2015, at its Irish Policy Conference, the union adopted a motion calling for decriminalisation of abortion in line with international human rights standards through the island of Ireland – a move which would necessarily entail repeal of the Eighth Amendment in the Republic.

In 1983, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions opposed the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment stating that *"the rigidity and inflexibility of constitutional directives on social and moral issues was inappropriate in a democracy"*. The ICTU has recently reaffirmed this position.

Unite maintains that reproductive rights have transformed the working lives of women and allowed immeasurable educational and social benefits. This makes the right to choose a clear trade union issue.

Below we highlight some of the issues of particular concern to women workers and to Unite members:

### **Eighth Amendment inherently discriminatory against women**

Although termination of pregnancy is theoretically lawful in the Republic within the parameters of the Eighth Amendment and the 2013 Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act, in practice these parameters are so restrictive as to render abortion inaccessible and to jeopardise women's health and lives. From Sheila Hodgers via Savita Halappanavar to 'Miss Y', women have lost their lives as a result of the equal status granted to a foetus under the Eighth Amendment.

It is Unite's position that women should not lose bodily autonomy during pregnancy and/or childbirth. They should not feel at risk during their pregnancy and all decisions relating to their person should be made by themselves. They should receive support to make their own decision regarding their sexual and reproductive health and to manage their own fertility, with healthcare professionals providing non-judgemental advice and care. Medical professionals providing such advice and care should be able to do so without fear of criminal sanction.

Last year over 3,400 women were forced to travel to Britain to access a termination. Other women – those who are financially or physically unable to travel, or who lack the necessary documentation – are forced to carry a pregnancy to term regardless of the consequences for their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

In Unite's view these restrictions are discriminatory and mean that the rights of pregnant women are uniquely restricted as opposed to the rights of men and of non-pregnant women when it comes to accessing appropriate healthcare.

### **Implications for low-income women**

At a time when the Republic is facing a low pay crisis, women are disproportionately likely to be low-paid and/or in precarious work.

Low-paid women workers, those dependent on Social Protection, or women in relationships where they do not enjoy financial autonomy are at a particular disadvantage since the cost of procuring a termination outside the jurisdiction may be prohibitive. According to the Irish Family Planning Association, the cost of an abortion depends on the gestation and the procedure carried out (medical or surgical), and can range from €400 to €1,800. This excludes travel and accommodation costs, including the costs of procuring travel documentation.

In addition, many women needing to travel for a termination face childcare issues which may be both practically and financially insurmountable.

Many women are forced to access essential savings, take out a credit union loan or even have recourse to moneylenders in order to fund a termination. The result may be simply to further impoverish low-income families and their children. For many others, access to what Unite regards as an essential healthcare procedure is simply beyond their financial reach.

### **Workplace issues**

In a situation where access to abortion is largely unavailable in the jurisdiction, and a termination is not viewed as a normal healthcare procedure, women workers are faced with a range of workplace issues which, in practical terms, further restrict their access to a termination and to essential post-abortion healthcare.

At the most basic level, women may be unable to obtain leave of absence at short notice and without explaining the situation to their line manager.

Upon return, women may find it difficult to take the time necessary for post-abortion check-ups, or to take time of work for any health or wellbeing issues connected with the abortion.

### **Ongoing harassment of advice centre staff and users**

Access to sexual and reproductive health services is crucial to women's health and well-being. It is also an international requirement under the 1981 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Yet pregnancy advice centre workers, and those trying to access independent advice and support, often face intimidation and stigma. In addition, there is an ongoing issue with so-called 'rogue' pregnancy advice agencies which provide unfounded, misleading and

sometimes dangerous information to women facing crisis pregnancies in an attempt to dissuade them from seeking a termination.

In this regard, Unite welcomes the recent Government decision not to oppose legislation designed to regulate crisis pregnancy agencies.

### **Conclusion**

It is increasingly clear that public opinion is ahead of public policy on this issue: according to the most recent opinion poll (Irish Times IPSOS/MRBI, 7 October 2016), 74 per cent of respondents support repeal of the Eighth Amendment.

Unite therefore advocates the holding of a referendum to Repeal the Eighth Amendment in its entirety as a necessary prelude to legislation providing for free, safe and legal abortion in Ireland.

In pursuit of this objective Unite has affiliated to the Abortion Rights Campaign, the Coalition to Repeal the Eighth Amendment and the Trade Union Campaign to Repeal the Eighth Amendment, which includes the Irish Congress of Trade Unions as well as individual unions.

\*\*\*\*\*

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Dear Sir or Madame

I am writing to you to let you know that I am in favour in keeping the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment

The following are the reasons why

1. Today we hear a lot about human rights once a baby is conceived they are entitled to the most basic human right of all that is the right to be born.
2. God forbid , if during pregnancy a baby was to develop ,foetal ,fatal abnormality , such as Thrishomy 13 or Thrishomy 18 or any other life threatening diseases, they are still entitled to the most basic human right ,that is the right to be born ,
3. They may survive or they may not survive for very long, that is up to Almighty God Himself.
4. The parents and other family members, look forward to the birth of those children, they look forward to holding those little babies in their arms.
5. No human being has the right to take the life of another whether born or unborn
6. When a pregnancy is terminated ,that is abortion it is murder , it violates the 5<sup>th</sup> commandment of God
7. If a baby is conceived as a result of its mother being raped, the baby still has a right to be born, adoption of the child or counselling would be better for the mother.

# **Green Party Reproductive Rights Policy**



**October 2015**

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## 1. Reproductive Rights

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### 1.1. The 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment

The Green Party supports the holding of a referendum to allow the people of Ireland determine whether or not the 8th Amendment should be repealed.

The Green Party will support a vote in favour of repeal in the above proposed referendum on the 8th amendment, on the condition that the Government have provided draft legislation which will be put in place if the referendum passes.

This would bring us in line with the recommendations of the UN special rapporteur on the right to health on their visit to Ireland. This will also bring us in line with International Law regarding reproductive justice.

### 1.2. Legislation

That upon the repeal of the 8th amendment the Green Party will advocate legislation allowing for the lawful termination of pregnancies in cases of

- fatal foetal abnormality
- rape
- incest
- endangerment to the health/life of the mother

The Green Party understands that abortion is always a last resort option. In keeping with this, we propose that there would also be provision of unbiased sex and relationship education, free gynaecological care for under 18s, and access to safe and affordable contraceptives.

The Green Party also recognises as part of reproductive justice that more provision must be made for women who choose to continue their pregnancies. We propose expanded maternity and parental leave and that there will be expanded programs of post-natal care, particularly regarding post-natal depression. Furthermore, the Green Party believes that more support can be provided for pregnant women at a community level through community midwives and local health centres. The Green Party also supports choice in maternity care, and would legislate for expanded choice in birthing, such as home births, where they are deemed safe.

The Green Party proposes to expand unbiased state counselling and advice services for pregnant women.

#### 1.2.1. An Outline of How Legislation Would be Developed

The Green Party understands that the health and safety of patients is the concern of medical practitioners, who have a professional duty and ethical code that society and government can respect, along with the patient and family involved. Therefore, in terms of imposing time limits and definitions of risk and any other limits on the above circumstances, the Green Party will defer that

decision to an expert medical group in line with current structures within the medical profession, which will be convened before any legislation is written.

### **1.2.2. An Outline of Proposed Legislation**

#### **Basic Pre-requisites for a lawful termination**

The abortion is performed at an authorised location.

Two registered medical practitioners are of the opinion, formed in good faith, that one of the below criteria is met

#### Fatal Foetal Abnormality

Under our proposal, an abortion may be performed if the foetus suffers from such anomaly or injury that

- it is unlikely to be born alive; or
- it is likely to die during birth; or
- it is unlikely to be capable of sustaining independent life after birth.

#### Rape/Incest

Given the severity of the crimes of rape and incest as well as the time-consuming nature of bringing about a conviction for these crimes, the Green Party believes that women who have been victims of these crimes should be able to legally access termination of a pregnancy which comes about as a result of these crimes.

#### Endangerment to the health/life of the mother

An abortion may be performed under this condition if:

- In forming their opinions, both registered medical practitioners have taken account of the pregnant woman's assessment of the potential risk to her life, which includes the risk of suicide.
- In forming their opinions, both registered medical practitioners have taken account of the pregnant woman's views on the impact of the continuance of the pregnancy on her physical and/or mental health.
- Both registered medical practitioners are of the opinion, formed in good faith, that the continuance of the pregnancy would entail a risk to the pregnant woman's physical and/or mental health.

In relation to risk assessment:

- The risk to health need not originate with the pregnancy. It can also refer to an Independent condition, whether new, pre-existing or recurring, or to a combination of conditions.

- The risk may already have materialised at the time of assessment, or may be expected to materialise in the future.
- The medical practitioners do not have to be satisfied that the abortion will completely eliminate the risk to the pregnant woman's health.
- The medical practitioners are required to make a holistic assessment of the pregnant woman's circumstances in their full context.

### 1.3. Decriminalization

The Green Party would not prosecute women who obtain abortions, however, we recognize the harms of "back-alley" or unregulated abortions, and so it would remain an offence to perform an unregulated abortion or to cause a woman to miscarry through assault.

### 1.4. Refusal of Care on Grounds of Conscience

Provide that:

- (1) Medical professionals, or other health care practitioners under their supervision, may refuse to participate in an abortion on the basis of a good faith conscientious objection, except where the abortion is immediately necessary to save the pregnant woman's life or to prevent severe or disabling damage to her health.
- (2) A person who has a conscientious objection shall without delay (i) inform the pregnant woman of the refusal of care in writing (ii) inform her of her right to see an alternative medical practitioner, nurse or midwife and (iii) make such arrangements for the transfer of her care as are necessary to enable her to access an abortion in a timely manner.
- (3) Health care institutions may not invoke a right to conscientious objection.
- (4) The Minister for Health retains the responsibility of ensuring that a safe and timely service is maintained for patients when accommodating conscientious objectors.
- (5) In any legal proceedings arising from this, the burden of proof of conscientious objection shall rest on the person claiming to rely on it.

#### 1.4.1. Establishment of an appeals process on refusal of a lawful termination

We would set up an independent review body to review cases where women are refused a lawful termination under this policy. The members of this review body shall be appointed through the public appointments process.

#### 1.4.2. Application for Review

Where a registered medical practitioner is of the opinion that a pregnant woman is not entitled to undergo an abortion under this policy, he or she shall immediately

- (1) inform her of that refusal, providing written confirmation within 24 hours;
- (2) inform her of her right to make an application to the review body; and
- (3) inform her of her right to seek a second opinion. If the pregnant woman prefers to seek a second opinion, the registered medical practitioner shall refer her to an alternative practitioner without delay.

**END**

Dear Members of the Citizens' Convention,

**Submission to argue against the abolition of the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment.**

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The fundamental question, the one question that truly matters, **the REAL question that each of you as a member or the Citizen's Convention are called on to decide is:**

**WHAT IS THE UNBORN?**

Scientists (embryologists, obstetricians), philosophers and Christian theologians are all in agreement: Human life begins at conception. That is the action that creates a specific individual - directing his/her own development, owning his/her own unique DNA sequences - the unique and continuous individual that we all once were, presently are, and continue to be somewhere along the continuum of human life from unborn stage to eventual death. Clearly **unborn babies are humans** and clearly fundamental human rights, including the **right to life**, applies to the unborn as much as to you and me.

**Please use your influence to protect the unborn by retaining the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment.**

Sincerely yours,

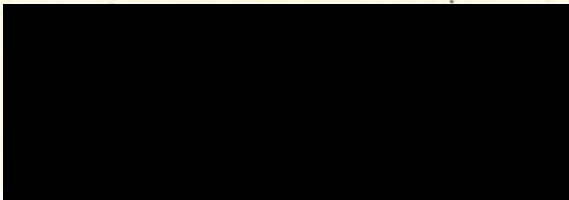
Name

J. L. L. L. L. L.

Date:

29/10/16

Address



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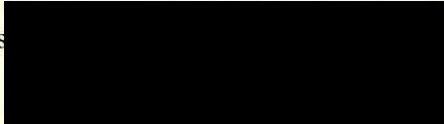
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Sincerely yours,

Name IMMACULEE NDOBA BEZA Date: 29/4/16

Address



A Chara,

I hope all voices will be really equal and fully heard in this debate. When did religion become a dirty word? All of us, pro-life or pro-choice come to our position as a result of our value or belief system. Yes, many pro-life people have come to their viewpoint on abortion partially based on their faith. However, does this somehow make their position less valid or relevant? How is this any different than someone who is pro-choice basing their stance on their own beliefs or value systems.

Does not our belief system, faith, or values form an essential role in a person's decision making process; whether it is a decision made in the workplace, in relationships, rearing children, our treatment of the environment and our views and relationship with society in general. I think most would agree that this is the case regardless of a person's religion or lack of. What are we really saying here, that a secular viewpoint is the only acceptable one? Is this the face of democracy now in Ireland?

More and more in the debate regarding repealing the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment, we are seeing those campaigning to repeal, dismissing the other argument with the "religion label", as a legitimate reason to dismiss all pro-life reasoning, and thereby render the points mute. What a lazy yet increasingly common tactic. Those in the pro-life movement come from all walks of life, faith and none. And surely during this debate, all voices should be heard. At what point did the label of "faith" or "religion" become a tool to totally dismiss a pro-life viewpoint? Surely we can do better than this as the debate progresses? Or perhaps this is a ploy to avoid debating and exploring the real issues and concerns that those who are pro-life have regarding removing the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment from our constitution.

We only have to look at a recent example of intolerance for those of faith speaking out on the issue where the Catholic Primate of Ireland caused a stir when he spoke on the abortion issue. While celebrities that support repeal of the 8<sup>th</sup> are lauded and admired and get the media headlines with no critique but when the leader of the Catholic Church in Ireland speaks out there is an outcry. Some politicians, campaigners and journalists clambering to criticise the archbishop and to point out that he is only one voice or is completely irrelevant in the debate

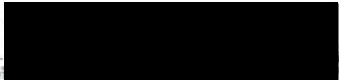
Surely it must be recognised that he is only doing his job, leading his flock and outlining the Church's teachings on the matter. The majority of the population of this country at 84% still identify themselves as Catholics, therefore surely the archbishop's comments have to carry some weight and relevance. Perhaps this is infact the problem, no high profile pro-life voices and certainly none that could possibly carry any influence. It would seem that since this public debate started that only pro-choice celebrities' views count. Meanwhile the archbishop and the church can continue offering their services like baptising, marrying and burying us but on everything else to remain silent.

Mise le meas,

*Bhairi Pearson*  
*Peoples Assembly*

29 NOV 2016

Remember to



DATE



I have carried children in my womb  
 and have felt them. I do not know their  
 destination. Is Ireland prepared to  
 turn its back on the decision  
 decision made by the people  
 over 30 years ago. Are  
 we prepared to let a  
 dominant media condition  
 us to accepting the  
 killing of the defenceless  
 Will smooth talking  
 powerful people destroy  
 our ethic of respect for  
 life, in the want & out  
 of it. Mary Gallagher

29/11/16

Use Your  
EIRCODE

STANDARD POSTCARD, PUBLISHED BY CHRONICLE BOOKS LLC IN 2014.



Citizens Assembly,  
 16, Parnell Sq.  
 Dublin 1.

30 NOV 2016

"TXT," ACRYLIC ON SYNTHETIC TEXTILE, 48" x 72", 2012.



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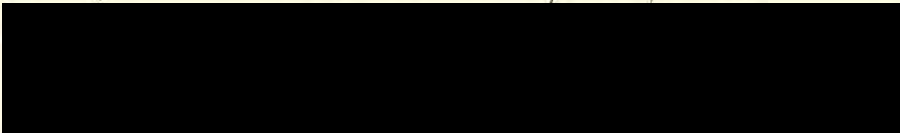
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**Please use your influence to protect the unborn by retaining the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment.**

Sincerely yours,

Name Rafael Indio Date: 30/11/16

Address



## The Eight Amendment of the Constitution

### To all Citizen Assembly members;

*“Every life that’s formed or ever comes to be,*

*is known to God the Father for all Eternity”*

As Citizen Assembly members you have been entrusted with a serious dilemma to discuss and sanction for our nation, to which I aim to assist your decision by stating the answers lie in the fore mentioned phrase. There is no problem no matter how great or how small that cannot be solved by remembering and practising this principle. Every mother’s life is precious and every unborn baby’s life is precious, therefore we are compelled to do everything possible at all times to save all human life, and find solutions that respect and reflect this ideology. It is not within our remit to decide to end another’s life.

Ask yourselves are you going to be propelled by pride and self-superiority or will you allow wisdom to be your guidance.

An unwanted pregnancy is an unwanted child – how and where does that fit into our “all inclusive” society. Many very loving and very suitable people are more than willing to adopt and parent rejected children, but our complicated laws hinder the smooth application of that approach. Mothers in crisis deserve our support and loyalty to see them through to the birth of their baby and beyond where required. Imagine!! Our society now favours abortion over future loving, parental care for unborn children. Imagine!! An unfavourable outcome from the Citizen Assembly’s discussions has the potential to “copper fasten” the termination of many lives and generations of families from our society.

Well think about this! What happens when your own time on earth elapses and you come face to face with the innocent unborn souls who missed out on their time on earth, because Abortion prevented it from happening. A

sheepish cry of sorrow for supporting and promoting abortion will not erase the damage, and so too justice will be inevitable.

Much prayer is needed by all of us that the 99+ members of the Assembly will be open to Gods' loving influence and direction. We must seek to demonstrate to all people of every nation that Abortion is never acceptable in any instance or circumstance, and abortion must never be confused with a premature Caesarean Section that occasionally may be required to save a woman's life, with every effort to save the life of the preborn premature baby also.

Saving and upholding the Eight Amendment is your stamp of approval and compassion for mother's and baby's in our country.

Yours Sincerely,



Martina Kinsella.

19 - DEC 2016

Opinion - Submissions

Querist : *Citizens Assembly*

Subject : *Eight Amendment Of The Constitution.*

*: Repeal Or Replacement Of Same?*

Matters to be considered

- 1) Is abortion the best option?
- 2) The consequences of abortion must be borne in mind.
- 3) Such consequences are: depression, remorse, feelings of guilt, health problems – possibly life long thereafter, deprivation of holding one's baby – for however short a time. Possible inability to bear any further children. May not be able to form long term relationship(s) – marriage; may have to carry a secret, from certain friends, for life, may not be able to concentrate on long term employment.
- 4) The abortion process is very cold hearted, in to and out from a clinic, no hospice treatment whatsoever, women should not be put through such a traumatic process.
- 5) The 2013 act: *Protection of life in Pregnancy* , has not addressed all the issues, has not been satisfactory, it was very much a reactionary act, to matters at that time, *Knee – Jerk* law is generally bad law..

1 – DEC 2016

- 6) Yes of course it is realised that women do suffer Crisis Pregnancy, but in a crisis, women need support – moral, medical, family support.
- 7) Women considering abortion should have all the consequences outlined, to them, in a cool, calm manner-atmosphere, they should not be forced into a making what may ultimately be a rash decision.
- 8) The big question is, whether there is a better way, the reality is that there is, it must of course be conveyed to people, that it is realised is not easy.
- 9) The issue here is : should the eight amendment be repealed, but replaced with what? A referendum will decide whether or not to replace the *eight amendment*, if indeed that is what is ultimately decided.
- 10) It must be remembered that the *eight amendment* has save many lives – babys lives, it has been hugely beneficial in the irish context.

#### Advice – Submission

- 11) It is submitted to the Citizens Assembly, that what is urgently needed is proper Hospice treatment, for girls / young – not so young women, who may find themselves in a crisis pregnancy situation, who may be considering abortion, in such a situation they may not be able to make a rational decision.
- 12) Medical practitioners should afford girls/women, in a crisis pregnancy situation, who may even be feeling suicidal, whose life may be at risk, the full facility of having their baby, in a proper hospice environment.

- 13) *Fatal foetal abnormalities (f f a )* is a term which is being used very loosely, and it is thought carelessly, by the Pro –Choice advocates. The *f f a* term is not a recognised medical term. Of course any woman carrying a foetus with serious medical conditions, is in a crisis situation, that is when proper medical care is necessary-essential.

Conclusion - Recommendation.

- 14) It is recommended that what is necessary is *Medical Practitioners Act or Amendment Act*, to enable practitioners to carry out the best possible clinical process on a girl/woman in a crisis pregnancy situation, so that she can have her baby, in a proper warm – hearted environment.
- 15) The baby may have serious ailments, may or may not live a long time.
- 16) In such a situation the baby would have or have – had a life, thereby ensuring the Right to Life.

Nothing further occurs on this serious matter at present, if anything further occurs, a further submission will be made.

I wish members of the Assembly every success in the serious Question(s) facing them.

Yours faithfully,

Patrick O'Leary B C L BL

Patrick J. O'Leary

RECEIVED 02 DEC 2016

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The fundamental question, the one question that truly matters, the **REAL** question that you as a member of the Citizen's Convention are called on to decide is:

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Please use your influence to protect the unborn by retaining the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

Sincerely yours,

Name CAROLINE NOON Date: 29/11/16

E-mail: [REDACTED]

RECEIVED 06 DEC 2016

To the Members of the Citizens Assembly

I enclose for your attention the amazing growth & development of the baby's life in the womb from fertilization to birth.

To date you have heard from a number of experts who spoke with the mother in mind (generally)

Please ensure you have an equal number of experts to speak for the Baby.

I hope the enclosed information will be helpful when making your Recommendations.

Regards

Josephine Bantley.  
Citizen.



## The Precious Life of the Unborn Child

*The baby's life in the womb is an astonishing odyssey of growth and development. As science makes clear, it is at fertilisation that a new, unique and genetically complete human being comes into existence.*

*From that moment onwards each of us did not grow and develop into a human being.*

*We grew and developed as a human being.*

- **18–21 days** after conception, before many women will even realise they are pregnant, the baby's heart is beating.
- At **8 weeks** every organ to be found in a fully grown adult person is already formed.
- At **11 weeks** fingerprints and fingernails can be clearly seen.
- At **12 weeks** the baby's lips open and close. The baby can turn her or his head and move around the womb.
- At **16 weeks** the baby reacts to sound, sucks, swallows and yawns.
- At **18 weeks** most mothers feel the baby moving. The baby exercises her or his developing muscles by pushing with the feet and head. The baby now sucks her or his thumb.
- At **24 weeks** the baby continues moving, hearing and perhaps even dreaming.
- At **30–40 weeks** the baby, if protected from harm, will continue to grow bigger and stronger until it is time to be born.



In England and Wales abortion is lawful up to 24 weeks and sometimes later. In 2011 there were 196,082 abortions in England and Wales.

RECEIVED 06 DEC 2016

4-12-16

Dear members of the Assembly  
I would like to put forward my point of view in respect of the debate currently taking place on the 8th Amendment.

Firstly, I am a Christian and a practising Roman Catholic. I truly believe that life should be respected and preserved from conception to natural death in all its forms, whether healthy or disabled and nothing should ever change that.

In general, I feel that Irish society is a caring society and that there are systems in place to support both mother and child. It leaves me feeling so very sad when I think about the murder of an innocent human being and the pain and suffering it silently endures when being torn apart from its mother's womb, surely it should be considered by all with any conscience to be an abhorrence and deep offence to God.

2

I am not a fanatical person in any sense but to me abortion is first degree pre-meditated MURDER of a human being. There is absolutely no excuse for murder and that is what it is - the killing of a human being.

I am enclosing a copy of a poem I wrote some years ago and it sums up my feelings on this and my utter sadness that such silent murder is taking place of the most innocent human beings and seemingly so acceptable to a large segment of mankind.

Please protect all human beings and afford them the right to life. I passionately believe this to be right.

Many thanks

Marion Feely

RECEIVED 19 DEC 2016  
RECEIVED 06 DEC 2016

## **LIFE**

**Life is a gift sent from Heaven to Earth  
To be treated with dignity, love and respect  
From the time of conception to the moment of birth  
Throughout all its days till its very last breath**

**Some people think life should be perfect in form  
To deserve their attention and the right to be born  
If it's found to be "faulty" it's sentenced to die  
From the pain of abortion, that poor little child**

**It's torn and dissected, discarded, not born  
Through murder made legal, "abortion" so-called  
Forgotten by everyone, to the world it's unknown  
Not even called human, the beloved unborn**

**God in his kindness made each one of us  
In his image and likeness and all out of dust  
It must take some loving, devotion, technique  
To make billions of people and each one unique**

**If I try to imagine the pain he feels when  
He looks on those children so rejected by men  
It's then that his words ring out clearly to me  
"Suffer little children to come unto me"**

RECEIVED 06 DEC 2016

**SUBMISSION TO THE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY**

Dear Members of the Citizens' Assembly,

One of the most crucial issues that the Citizens' Assembly has been asked to consider is that of a potential referendum to repeal the 8th amendment of the Constitution.

The 8th amendment guarantees the equal right to life of both women and their unborn children. The 8th was approved by the people in 1983 and, since that time, has saved more than **250,000 lives**. 250,000 Irish people are alive today because our pro-life laws recognize the worth and dignity of every human person.

Because of our law, all citizens are given an equal – it does not allow our society to discriminate against children because of disabilities, or gender, or size, or just because they are considered "unwanted". The 8th protects the most basic human right - the right to life - of these children and their mothers.

The 8th amendment allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving treatment to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. In fact, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.

Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights, and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. We recognise that no one should have the right to decide whether another person can live or die.


Societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members. Ireland should continue to protect the most vulnerable among us.

On my behalf, and on behalf of all those smallest of citizens who are relying on adults to protect them, save the 8th amendment.

Sincerely,

Signature: Sheila Brady

Name: Sheila Brady

Address: 

To the Citizens Assembly,

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Please use your influence to protect the unborn by retaining the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

Sincerely yours,

Name Bridie O'Halloran Date: 30/11/16

RECEIVED 09 DEC 2016

To The members of the Citizens  
Assembly

Unborn babies have a right to  
Life

They are human beings from  
Conception

Abortion is murder

KEEP the 8th amendment

RECEIVED 09 DEC 2016

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Sincerely yours,

Name John Boyke Date: 30/11/2016

RECEIVED 09 DEC 2016



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3. Dependency: Whether a bed-ridden individual dependent on caring relatives, a breast fed baby dependent on mother's milk or a fetus fully dependent on mother's womb, all human rights apply equally to each individual person.

The fundamental question, the one question that truly matters, the **REAL** question that you as a member of the Citizen's Convention are called on to decide is:

**WHAT IS THE UNBORN?**

Scientists (embryologists, obstetricians), philosophers and Christian theologians are all in agreement: Human life begins at conception. That is the action that creates a specific individual - directing his/her own development, owning his/her own unique DNA sequences - the unique and continuous individual that we all once were, presently is, and continue to be somewhere along the continuum of human life from unborn stage to eventual death. Clearly **unborn babies are humans** and clearly fundamental human rights, including the **right to life**, applies to the unborn as much as to you and me.

Please use your influence to protect the unborn by retaining the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

Sincerely yours,

Name Kelly Anne Roiley Date: 18/11/16

RECEIVED 09 DEC 2016

RECEIVED 09 DEC 2016

Submission to the Citizens Assembly regarding the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution.

I fully support the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution - I believe that we should continue to acknowledge the humanity of the unborn child and recognise that this vulnerable human being needs to be protected by our laws, as are all other citizens, regardless of health, life expectancy, ability or disability.

A country shows its compassion by how it treats its most vulnerable members, and those who are ill or have a terminal prognosis surely fall into this category. Unborn babies with a life limiting condition, and their families, need our care and support, not pressure that the only option is to end their lives sooner. I believe that we should be improving perinatal hospice care rather than destroying a life because of a diagnosis which is not infallible.

Regarding pregnancy due to rape – this a terrible crime of violence against a woman, and it is absolutely right that we seek to punish the rapist to the full extent of the law but in no other situation do we destroy an innocent life because of someone else's crime.

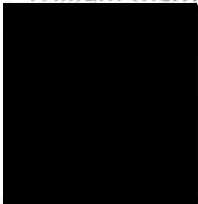
I am glad to live in a country with an excellent record in caring for women in pregnancy. I am also glad that no treatment is withheld to a woman in illness, even if it causes a risk to her baby – but this is very different to advocating abortion as a medical therapeutic intervention, which it isn't.

I am proud of our 8<sup>th</sup> amendment protecting the human right to life of our unborn citizens and I hope that you will continue to protect this.

Thankyou



William McMahon



12 DEC 2016

7<sup>th</sup> December 2016

Members of the Citizens' Assembly,

The Citizens' Assembly has been asked to consider a referendum to repeal the right to life of the unborn child as protected under the 8th amendment to the Constitution. As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

The 8th amendment guarantees the equal right to life of both women and their unborn children. The 8th was approved by the people in 1983 and, since that time, has saved an estimated 250,000 lives because our abortion rate has remained much lower than that of countries with legalised abortion. In Britain for example, one in every five babies is killed by abortion. In Ireland that figure is one in every twenty. If we had Britain's abortion rate we would see 10,000 more abortions every year - or 30 more every day. No reasonable person would welcome more abortions.

The 8th amendment is a piece of legislation that ensures the protection of the most basic human rights. Science tells us that preborn babies are human beings and deserving of the protection of society. At 21 days gestation, our hearts are already beating. Every abortion ends a human life.

The 8th amendment protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. In fact, as top medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.

Abortion also hurts women. A 2008 study (Fergusson et al) found that post-abortive women are 30% more likely to experience serious mental health problems while a 2006 study (Gissler et al) found that the suicide rate for post-abortive women was six times higher than women who had given birth.

Abortion does not only have negative effects on women but it is also a cruel and inhumane practice towards the unborn. These children are dismembered and removed piece by piece or given a lethal injection directly into their hearts. This practice is both medieval and barbaric.

Because of our law, the equal right to life of babies with disabilities and severe life limiting conditions are guaranteed the same protections as every other child. While abortion activists treat these children as if they were already dead, the fact is that most babies, even the most severe cases, live after birth and their families find their time together enormously healing. Parents of these babies recognize their children's lives as precious and say that improved perinatal hospice care, not abortion, is what they need.

Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. I urge you to consider this carefully and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

Please protect that 8th amendment.

Yours Faithfully

Anthony Loughran

12 DEC 2016

Members of the Citizens Assembly

As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

The 8<sup>th</sup> amendment protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. In fact, as top medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.

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I urge you to consider this carefully and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members and the unborn has a right to life.

Please protect that 8<sup>th</sup> amendment.

Thank you.

Catherine Mountagh, R.N.

12 DEC 2016

Members of the Citizens Assembly

As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

The 8<sup>th</sup> amendment is a piece of legislation that ensures the protection of the most basic human rights. Science tells us that preborn babies are human beings and deserving of the protection of society. At 21 days gestation, our hearts are already beating. Every abortion ends a human life.

Abortion not only has negative effects on women but it is also a cruel and inhumane practice towards the unborn. These children are dismembered and removed piece by piece or given a lethal injection directly into their hearts. This practice is both medieval and barbaric.

I urge you to consider this carefully and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

Please protect that 8<sup>th</sup> amendment.

Thank you.

*Giulietta A. Hughes*

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To the Citizens Assembly,

**Submission to argue against the abolition of the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment.**

Since the foundation of the State, the Republic and our citizens has chosen to accept and respect that fundamental human rights apply to all human beings, regardless of status, race, creed, gender, ability, stage of development, environment or state of dependency.

The first five categories mentioned above are self-explanatory, however the last three categories are not often quoted, please allow me to explain briefly:

1. Stage of development: Human beings' fundamental right to life exists as much for a newborn (early stage of development) as for a 35year old mature adult. The same applies for a fetus in very early stage of development.
2. Environment: Human beings' fundamental rights applies as much to members of an undiscovered tribe in the Amazon jungle as for someone living in a penthouse apartment in Dublin 2. The same applies for human beings in the environment of their mothers' womb.
3. Dependency: Whether a bed-ridden individual dependent on caring relatives, a breast fed baby dependent on mother's milk or a fetus fully dependent on mother's womb, all human rights apply equally to each individual person.

The fundamental question, the one question that truly matters, the **REAL** question that you as a member or the Citizen's Convention are called on to decide is:

**WHAT IS THE UNBORN?**

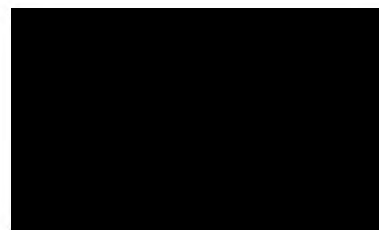
Scientists (embryologists, obstetricians), philosophers and Christian theologians are all in agreement: Human life begins at conception. That is the action that creates a specific individual - directing his/her own development, owning his/her own unique DNA sequences - the unique and continuous individual that we all once were, presently is, and continue to be somewhere along the continuum of human life from unborn stage to eventual death. Clearly **unborn babies are humans** and clearly fundamental human rights, including the **right to life**, applies to the unborn as much as to you and me.

Please use your influence to protect the unborn by retaining the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

Sincerely yours,

Name Boudget Tobin Date: 11-12-2016

13 DEC 2016



2/12/16

Members of the Citizens Assembly

As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

The 8<sup>th</sup> amendment is a piece of legislation that ensures the protection of the most basic human rights. Science tells us that preborn babies are human beings and deserving of the protection of society. At 21 days gestation, our hearts are already beating. Every abortion ends a human life.

Abortion not only has negative effects on women but it is also a cruel and inhumane practice towards the unborn. These children are dismembered and removed piece by piece or given a lethal injection directly into their hearts. This practice is both medieval and barbaric.

I urge you to consider this carefully and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

Please protect that 8<sup>th</sup> amendment.

Thank you.

Enda Kulbany

To the Citizens Assembly,

**Submission to argue against the abolition of the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment.**

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Please use your influence to protect the unborn by retaining the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

Sincerely yours,

Name Joan Hanaf Date: 10-12-16.



**SUBMISSION TO THE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY**

Dear Members of the Citizens' Assembly,

One of the most crucial issues that the Citizens' Assembly has been asked to consider is that of a potential referendum to repeal the 8th amendment of the Constitution.

The 8th amendment guarantees the equal right to life of both women and their unborn children. The 8th was approved by the people in 1983 and, since that time, has saved more than **250,000 lives**. 250,000 Irish people are alive today because our pro-life laws recognize the worth and dignity of every human person.

Because of our law, all citizens are given an equal – it does not allow our society to discriminate against children because of disabilities, or gender, or size, or just because they are considered "unwanted". The 8th protects the most basic human right - the right to life - of these children and their mothers.

The 8th amendment allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving treatment to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. In fact, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.

Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights, and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. We recognise that no one should have the right to decide whether another person can live or die.

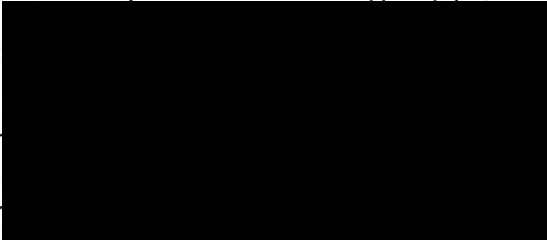
Societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members. Ireland should continue to protect the most vulnerable among us.

On my behalf, and on behalf of all those smallest of citizens who are relying on adults to protect them, save the 8th amendment.

Sincerely,

Signature: Josephine Geiffin

Name: Josephine Geiffin

Address: 

**13 DEC 2016**

Citizens Assembly  
16 Parnell Square  
Dublin 1

Date: 9/12/2016

Members of the Citizens' Assembly,

The Citizens' Assembly has been asked to consider a referendum to repeal the right to life of the unborn child as protected under the 8th amendment to the Constitution. As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

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Abortion also hurts women. A 2008 study (Fergusson et al) found that post-abortive women are 30% more likely to experience serious mental health problems while a 2006 study (Gissler et al) found that the suicide rate for post-abortive women was six times higher than women who had given birth.

Abortion is does not only have negative effects on women but it is also a cruel and inhumane practice towards the unborn. These children are dismembered and removed piece by piece or given a lethal injection directly into their hearts. This practice is both

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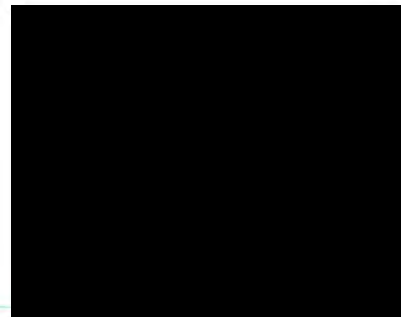
Please protect that 8th amendment.

Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_

13 DEC 2016



Citizens Assembly  
16 Parnell Square  
Dublin 1

Date: 10<sup>th</sup> Dec 2016

Members of the Citizens' Assembly,

The Citizens' Assembly has been asked to consider a referendum to repeal the right to life of the unborn child as protected under the 8th amendment to the Constitution. As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

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Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. I urge you to consider this carefully and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

Please protect that 8th amendment.

Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Broadbent". The signature is written in black ink and features a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends to the right of the name.

**SUBMISSION TO:**  
**Justice Mary Laffoy**  
**and members of the Citizens' Assembly,**  
**16 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.**

**I wish to make some of my views known,**

1. The 8th Amendment guarantees the equal right to life of **both** mothers and their unborn children.
2. The 8th Amendment protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.
3. Leading medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws.
4. The inquest findings on the sad death of Savita Halappanavar, who died in 2012, found that her death was due to medical misadventure and was not related to the 8th Amendment.
5. Countless lives of unborn children have been saved since 1983 because of the 8th Amendment.
6. Every child **born or unborn** has the right to life including those children with life-limiting conditions and those conceived through rape or incest.



13 DEC 2016

7. **Rape and incest are horrific crimes, but nothing can justify the killing of the innocent unborn baby in any such case.**
8. **Because of the 8th Amendment, the equal right to life of babies with disabilities and those with severe life-limiting conditions is guaranteed, and given the same protection as every other child.**
9. **Abortion kills babies and hurts women.** A study in Finland by Mika Gissler in 1997 found that the **suicide rate among women who had undergone abortions** in the prior year was **three times higher** compared to women in the general population and **six times higher** compared to women who gave birth. A follow-up study by Gissler in 2014 found no statistically significant decrease in the suicide rate.

**I wish to RETAIN the 8th AMENDMENT,**

**Yours sincerely,**

*Margaret Gallagher*

**Address:**

**Telephone:**

**Email:**

**SUBMISSION TO THE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY**

Dear Members of the Citizens' Assembly,

One of the most crucial issues that the Citizens' Assembly has been asked to consider is that of a potential referendum to repeal the 8th amendment of the Constitution.

The 8th amendment guarantees the equal right to life of both women and their unborn children. The 8th was approved by the people in 1983 and, since that time, has saved more than **250,000 lives**. 250,000 Irish people are alive today because our pro-life laws recognize the worth and dignity of every human person.

Because of our law, all citizens are given an equal – it does not allow our society to discriminate against children because of disabilities, or gender, or size, or just because they are considered "unwanted". The 8th protects the most basic human right - the right to life - of these children and their mothers.

The 8th amendment allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving treatment to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. In fact, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.

Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights, and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. We recognise that no one should have the right to decide whether another person can live or die.


Societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members. Ireland should continue to protect the most vulnerable among us.

On my behalf, and on behalf of all those smallest of citizens who are relying on adults to protect them, save the 8th amendment.

Sincerely,

Signature: Mary O'Connor

Name: MARY O'CONNOR

Address: 



Members of the Citizens Assembly

As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

The 8<sup>th</sup> amendment is a piece of legislation that ensures the protection of the most basic human rights. Science tells us that preborn babies are human beings and deserving of the protection of society. At 21 days gestation, our hearts are already beating. Every abortion ends a human life.

Abortion also hurts women. A 2008 study (Fergusson et al) found that post-abortive women are 30% more likely to experience serious mental health problems while a 2006 study (Gissler et al) found that the suicide rate for post-abortive women was six times higher than women who had given birth.

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I urge you to consider this carefully and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members and the unborn has a right to life.

Please protect that 8<sup>th</sup> amendment.

Thank you.

*Michael, Mary & Kieran  
Chapman*

**SUBMISSION TO THE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY**

Dear Members of the Citizens' Assembly,

One of the most crucial issues that the Citizens' Assembly has been asked to consider is that of a potential referendum to repeal the 8th amendment of the Constitution.

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Societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members. Ireland should continue to protect the most vulnerable among us.

On my behalf, and on behalf of all those smallest of citizens who are relying on adults to protect them, save the 8th amendment.

Sincerely,

Signature: Olive Helfert,

Name: Olive Helfert

Address: 

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# SUBMISSION

To

## CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY

### 2016

#### PART I

IN THE COURSE OF 29 YEARS IN HOSPITAL CHAPLAINCY, HERE IN SLIGO, I HAVE HAD CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE OF SITUATIONS INVOLVING LIFE-LIMITING CONDITIONS IN NEWBORN BABIES, INCLUDING Patau's SYNDROME, EDWARDS' SYNDROME AND ANENCEPHALY.

I HAVE FREQUENTLY FOUND MYSELF IN THE COMPANY OF THE PARENTS OF NEWBORN BABIES WHO WERE SUFFERING FROM ONE OF THESE CONDITIONS.

THE TIME SPENT TOGETHER — MOTHER AND CHILD OR BOTH PARENTS AND CHILD — HAS INVARIABLY BEEN A PERIOD OF PROFOUND EMOTION FOR SUCH PARENTS.

WHILE HURT, DISAPPOINTMENT, DISBELIEF AND "GRIEVING THE DREAM" HAVE BEEN PAINFULLY PRESENT, I HAVE BEEN AMAZED AND HUMBLED, AGAIN AND AGAIN, BY THE CONTINUOUS PRESENCE OF MOST PARENTS (USUALLY IN OUR NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT) AND BY THE

DEPTH AND INTENSITY OF THEIR AFFECTION FOR THEIR BABY, UP TO AND WELL BEYOND THAT LAST SMALL BREATH.

ONE PARTICULAR EXPERIENCE, ONE PARTICULAR IMAGE, STAYS WITH ME:

THIS LITTLE ANENCEPHALIC BABY, ENFOLDED IN A SOFT BLANKET, BEING PASSED FROM THE ARMS OF A YOUNG STAFF NURSE INTO THE ARMS OF A LOVING MOTHER — AND THIS THOUGHT COMING CLEARLY TO MY MIND: THE FUTURE OF HUMANKIND RESTS IN ARMS LIKE THESE...

## PART II

RECENTLY, WHILE ON A TRAIN JOURNEY, I MET A MIDDLE-AGED COUPLE.

THEY HAVE A SON WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY OF WHOM THEY SPOKE WITH PARENTAL AFFECTION AND PRIDE.

CIARAM (NOT HIS REAL NAME) LIVES WITH THEM. HE IS IN HIS TWENTIES.

THANKS TO A WIDE RANGE OF EDUCATIONAL AND OTHER SUPPORTS, JOINTLY PROVIDED BY THE

STATUTORY AND VOLUNTARY SECTORS, CIARAN HAS, AT THIS STAGE, WORKED HIS WAY UP TO FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT IN HIS OWN COMMUNITY.

CIARAN'S MOTHER REFERRED TO RECENTLY-QUOTED STATISTICS FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM, INDICATING AN ABORTION RATE OF 90% FOLLOWING DIAGNOSIS OF DOWN SYNDROME IN PREGNANCY.

(CF. PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY INTO ABORTION ON THE GROUNDS OF DISABILITY, UK 2013)

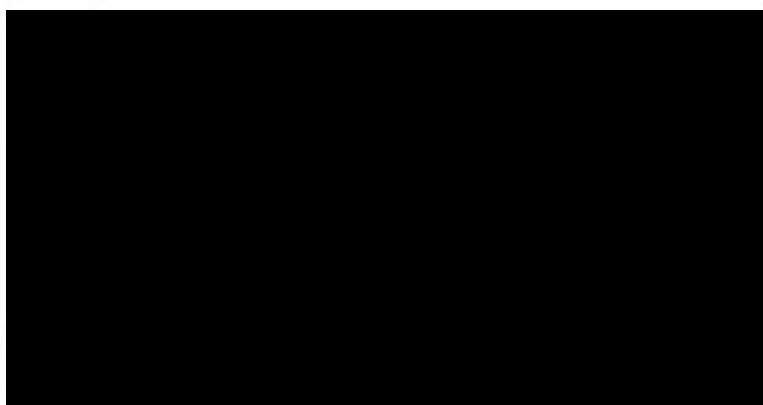
HERE IN IRELAND, CHANGE BECKONS.

IN IMMEDIATE TERMS, WHAT IS BEING PROMOTED IS AN ALTERATION TO THE CONSTITUTION (AS AMENDED).

INESCAPABLY (IF UNINTENTIONALLY), WHAT IS BEING PROMOTED, LONG-TERM, IS A RADICALLY ALTERED PERCEPTION OF THE HUMAN PERSON IN OUR SOCIETY.

SUBMITTED IN A PERSONAL CAPACITY BY:

John Carroll  
(REV.) JOHN CARROLL



PHONE (PERSONAL):

Comments (500 word maximum): I wish to retain the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment for all reasons outlined on this leaflet.

13 DEC 2016

Additional information:

Name:..... Sarah McGoogle .....

Email:.....

I do not have an email address and am happy to use donegalprolife123@gmail.com

Address: [Redacted]

Organisation: [Redacted]

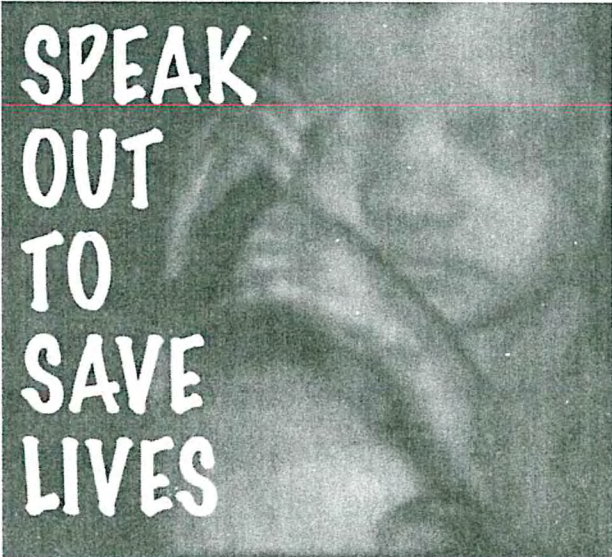
Topic: The 8th Amendment of the Constitution

Title of Submission: **RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT**

**LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD  
DONEGAL PRO LIFE**

SUBMISSIONS CAN BE MADE BY  
email to: [info@citizensassembly.ie](mailto:info@citizensassembly.ie)  
Online at [www.citizensassembly.ie](http://www.citizensassembly.ie)  
or send by post before the  
Monday 12<sup>th</sup>. December to:

Citizens' Assembly  
16 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.



## **SUBMISSION TO: Justice Mary Laffoy and members of the Citizens' Assembly.**



### **The 8th Amendment of the Constitution should be retained for the following reasons:**

- The 8th Amendment guarantees the equal right to life of **both** mothers and their unborn children.
- The 8th Amendment protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.
- Leading medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws.
- Countless lives of unborn children have been saved since 1983 because of the 8th Amendment.
- The inquest findings on the sad death of Savita Halappanavar, who died in 2012, found that her death was due to medical misadventure and was not related to the 8th Amendment.
- Every child **born or unborn** has the right to life including those children with life-limiting conditions and those conceived through rape or incest.
- **Rape and incest are horrific crimes**, but nothing can justify the killing of the **innocent unborn baby** in any such case.
- **Because of the 8th Amendment, the equal right to life of babies with disabilities and those with severe life-limiting conditions is guaranteed, and given the same protection as every other child.**
- **Abortion kills babies and hurts women.** A study in Finland by Mika Gissler in 1997 found that the **suicide rate among women who had undergone abortions** in the prior year was **three times higher** compared to women in the general population and **six times higher** compared to women who gave birth. A follow-up study by Gissler in 2014 found no statistically significant decrease in the suicide rate.

To the Citizens Assembly,

**Submission to argue against the abolition of the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment.**

Since the foundation of the State, the Republic and our citizens has chosen to accept and respect that fundamental human rights apply to all human beings, regardless of status, race, creed, gender, ability, stage of development, environment or state of dependency.

The first five categories mentioned above are self-explanatory, however the last three categories are not often quoted, please allow me to explain briefly:

1. Stage of development: Human beings' fundamental right to life exists as much for a newborn (early stage of development) as for a 35year old mature adult. The same applies for a fetus in very early stage of development.
2. Environment: Human beings' fundamental rights applies as much to members of an undiscovered tribe in the Amazon jungle as for someone living in a penthouse apartment in Dublin 2. The same applies for human beings in the environment of their mothers' womb.
3. Dependency: Whether a bed-ridden individual dependent on caring relatives, a breast fed baby dependent on mother's milk or a fetus fully dependent on mother's womb, all human rights apply equally to each individual person.

The fundamental question, the one question that truly matters, the **REAL** question that you as a member or the Citizen's Convention are called on to decide is:

**WHAT IS THE UNBORN?**

Scientists (embryologists, obstetricians), philosophers and Christian theologians are all in agreement: Human life begins at conception. That is the action that creates a specific individual - directing his/her own development, owning his/her own unique DNA sequences - the unique and continuous individual that we all once were, presently is, and continue to be somewhere along the continuum of human life from unborn stage to eventual death. Clearly **unborn babies are humans** and clearly fundamental human rights, including the **right to life**, applies to the unborn as much as to you and me.

Please use your influence to protect the unborn by retaining the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

Sincerely yours,

Name  Date: 14/12/16



13 DEC 2016

**SUBMISSION TO:**  
**Justice Mary Laffoy and**  
**members of the Citizens' Assembly.**



**The 8th Amendment of the Constitution should be retained for the following reasons:**

- The 8th Amendment guarantees the equal right to life of **both** mothers and their unborn children.
- The 8th Amendment protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.
- Leading medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws.
- Countless lives of unborn children have been saved since 1983 because of the 8th Amendment.
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Comments (500 word maximum): I wish to retain the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment for all reasons outlined on this leaflet.

Additional information:

Name:.....SEAN Mc GILL.....

Email:.....  
I do not have an email address and am happy to use donegalprolife123@gmail.com

Address: [Redacted]

Organisation: [NONE]

Topic: The 8th Amendment of the Constitution

Title of Submission: RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT

# LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD

## DONEGAL PRO LIFE

SUBMISSIONS CAN BE MADE BY  
email to: [info@citizensassembly.ie](mailto:info@citizensassembly.ie)  
Online at [www.citizensassembly.ie](http://www.citizensassembly.ie)  
or send by post before the  
Monday 12<sup>th</sup>. December to:  
**Citizens' Assembly**  
**16 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.**



**Submission to Citizens' Assembly  
December 2016**

14 DEC 2016

The Citizens' Assembly has been asked to consider a referendum to repeal the right to life of the unborn child as protected under the 8th amendment to the Constitution. As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

The 8th amendment guarantees the equal right to life of both women and their unborn children. The 8th was approved by the people in 1983 and, since that time, has saved an estimated 250,000 lives because our abortion rate has remained much lower than that of countries with legalised abortion. In Britain for example, one in every five babies is killed by abortion. In Ireland that figure is one in every twenty. If we had Britain's abortion rate we would see 10,000 more abortions every year – or 30 more every day. No reasonable person would welcome more abortions.

The 8th amendment ensures the protection of the most basic human rights. Science tells us that preborn babies are human beings, and therefore deserving of the same protections that all humans enjoy. At 21 days gestation, our hearts are already beating. Every abortion ends a human life.

The 8th amendment protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. In fact, as top medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.

Abortion also hurts women. A 2008 study (Fergusson et al) found that post-abortive women are 30% more likely to experience serious mental health problems while a 2006 study (Gissler et al) found that the suicide rate for post-abortive women was six times higher than women who had given birth.

Abortion not only has negative effects on women, but it is also a cruel and inhumane practice towards the unborn. These children are dismembered and removed piece by piece or given a lethal injection directly into their hearts. This practice is both medieval and barbaric.

Because of our law, babies with disabilities and severe life limiting conditions are guaranteed the same protections as every other child. While abortion activists treat these children as if they were already dead, the fact is that most babies, even the most severe cases, live after birth and their families find their time together enormously healing. Parents of these babies recognize their children's lives as precious and say that improved perinatal hospice care, not abortion, is what they need.

Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. I urge you to consider this carefully, and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

Please protect the 8th amendment.

Thank you!

Name: Anna Condon (Mrs)

Address: 

14 DEC 2016

14 DEC 2016

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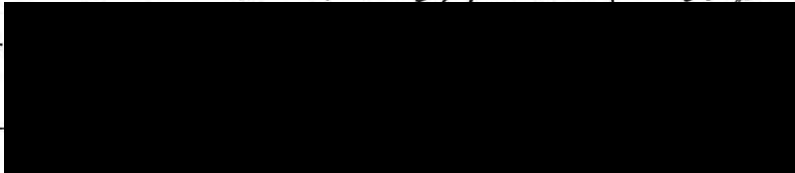
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Thank you!

Name: Christina Kjelleva (Miss)

Address: 

14 DEC 2016

## Submission to Citizens' Assembly

December 14<sup>th</sup> 2016

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Please protect that 8th amendment.

Thank you!

Name: Christine O Meade

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Citizens Assembly  
16 Parnell Square  
Dublin 1

14 DEC 2016

14 DEC 2016

Date: 13 / 12 / 2016

A Chara,

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Please protect that 8th amendment.  
 Thank you!

Signed: Elaine Clifford

14 DEC 2016

Submission to Citizens' Assembly  
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Please protect the 8th amendment.

Thank you!

Name: Ellen O'Connell

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Submission to  
Citizens Assembly

14 DEC 2016

13-12-2016

PLEASE protect the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment

Only Four words are necessary.

"Thou shalt not kill"

(The 5<sup>th</sup> Commandment of God and  
of the Church.)

A very concerned citizen.  
(Mrs) Ethna Cotter.

Enclosure



14 DEC 2016

**Submission to Citizens' Assembly  
December 2016**

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Please protect the 8th amendment.

See enclosure

Thank you!

Name: MRS Ethna Cotter

Ac

Submission to Citizens Assembly

14 DEC 2016

I am a Retired Priest Archdiocese of Dublin  
When I was an active priest - I often ministered in the U.K.  
relating priests there on their annual vacation.  
On one occasion a married lady told me her dramatic story  
to do with an interview she had with her doctor concerning  
her pregnancy.

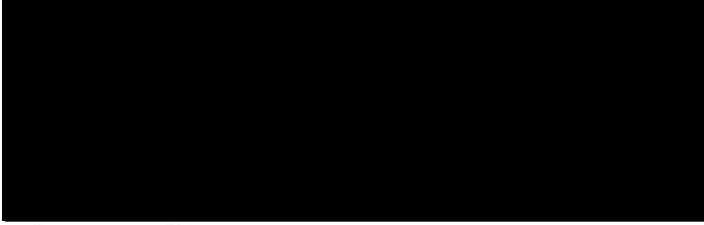
She was aged 43 and some time previously - about 1 1/2 years  
- I believe - she had a child - Now she was pregnant again.  
Her doctor - said to her - Now Miss..... this time it has  
to be a termination for you! She angrily retorted -  
"How dare you even suggest that - you have no right -  
You are breaking the law by your comments - The doctor  
said - I am only trying to help you avoid future  
complications - you know the possibility of giving birth to  
a physically retarded child at your age. The lady  
was very angry and pointed out that the doctor by  
his comments was breaking the 1967 Law in the  
U.K.

The lady told me that her episode was not unique.  
Other women told her that they experienced the same  
pressurisation to end their pregnancies - when such  
events - posed a very slight risk to the unborn child.  
I point out these facts - as the danger in every civilised state  
does not obviate medical practitioners from playing God -  
with the lives of the unborn.

Signed  
(FR.) Con M<sup>c</sup> Gillivuddy

12/12/16.

To



Submission to Citizens Assembly.

I am very much in favour of  
Retaining the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment protects the life  
of the unborn.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment protects the baby  
in the womb and the mother.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment is a protection  
against ABORTION.

ABORTION is a Horror of Horrors.

In Ireland we have the best medical  
care for mother & babies.

Please Keep the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment for  
the protection of Mother & Baby.

God Bless All. Freda Ryan



14 DEC 2016



1/19/16

Members of the Citizens Assembly

As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

The 8<sup>th</sup> amendment is a piece of legislation that ensures the protection of the most basic human rights. Science tells us that preborn babies are human beings and deserving of the protection of society. At 21 days gestation, our hearts are already beating. Every abortion ends a human life.

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I urge you to consider this carefully and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

Please protect that 8<sup>th</sup> amendment.

Thank you.

John James Siskin

Dear Citizens Assembly,

134

14 DEC 2016

**§Submission to Citizens' Assembly  
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Please protect the 8th amendment.

*Liam Kearns*

Thank you!

Name: LIAM KEARNS

Address: 

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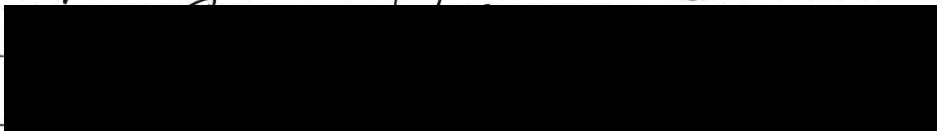
Please protect the 8th amendment.

Thank you!

Name:

*Máire Mhic Giolla Rua.*

Address:







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Because of our law, babies with disabilities and severe life limiting conditions are guaranteed the same protections as every other child. While abortion activists treat these children as if they were already dead, the fact is that most babies, even the most severe cases, live after birth and their families find their time together enormously healing. Parents of these babies recognize their children's lives as precious and say that improved perinatal hospice care, not abortion, is what they need.

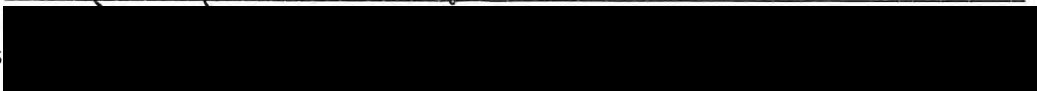
Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. I urge you to consider this carefully, and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

Please protect the 8th amendment.

Thank you!

Name: MR Maurice DeJone

Address



Comments (500 word maximum): I wish to retain the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment for all reasons outlined on this leaflet.

14 DEC 2016

Additional information:

Name: MICHELLE KENNA.....

Email:.....

I do not have an email address and am happy to use donegalprolife123@gmail.com

Address: [Redacted]

FROM DONEGAL PRO LIFE

Organisation: To CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY

Topic: The 8th Amendment of the Constitution

Title of Submission: RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD  
DONEGAL PRO LIFE

SUBMISSIONS CAN BE MADE BY  
email to: [info@citizensassembly.ie](mailto:info@citizensassembly.ie)  
Online at [www.citizensassembly.ie](http://www.citizensassembly.ie)  
or send by post before the  
Monday 12<sup>th</sup>. December to:

Citizens' Assembly  
16 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.



## **SUBMISSION TO: Justice Mary Laffoy and members of the Citizens' Assembly.**



### **The 8th Amendment of the Constitution should be retained for the following reasons:**

- The 8th Amendment guarantees the equal right to life of **both** mothers and their unborn children.
- The 8th Amendment protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.
- Leading medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws.
- Countless lives of unborn children have been saved since 1983 because of the 8th Amendment.
- The inquest findings on the sad death of Savita Halappanavar, who died in 2012, found that her death was due to medical misadventure and was not related to the 8th Amendment.
- Every child **born or unborn** has the right to life including those children with life-limiting conditions and those conceived through rape or incest.
- **Rape and incest are horrific crimes**, but nothing can justify the killing of the **innocent unborn baby** in any such case.
- **Because of the 8th Amendment, the equal right to life of babies with disabilities and those with severe life-limiting conditions is guaranteed, and given the same protection as every other child.**
- **Abortion kills babies and hurts women.** A study in Finland by Mika Gissler in 1997 found that the **suicide rate among women who had undergone abortions** in the prior year was **three times higher** compared to women in the general population and **six times higher** compared to women who gave birth. A follow-up study by Gissler in 2014 found no statistically significant decrease in the suicide rate.

14 DEC 2016

## SUBMISSION ON REPEAL OF THE EIGHTH AMENDMENT TO THE IRISH CONSTITUTION

Everybody nowadays knows about DNA. When a man and a woman produce a new member of the human family at conception the fertilised egg contains the DNA of a unique new individual. It is, as any viewer of crime and detection stories knows, unique for the length of the life of that new life, and is used as an identifier of such. To try to refer to it as “just a blob of Jelly”, “just a bundle of cells” or other demeaning terms is to miss the way that biology works in human reproduction. This ploy is also intended to cover arguments to allow the termination – in this case not just ending the growth of, but the killing of, the new member of our species.

Of course the new life will, if allowed, and with the guidance of his/her own DNA, go through the growth and development stages we recognise using terms we gave these stages for our convenience in Biology, Medical science and Sociology such as Zygote, Embryo, Foetus, Prenatal stage, Baby, Infant, Toddler, etc. up through Teens Young Adults, Adult, Elderly and so on. To none of these can we logically or biologically say “You are not a Human, not Human yet, not a Human because of a disability, no longer Human since your accident, no longer Human because you are too old”. We have made those mistakes referring to race, colour, gender, religion, stranger, any difference, before. Do we really want to go back and retrace these old, old, and costly mistakes with all the killing, suffering and damage to our human societies that they brought.

More recently other countries and indeed elements of our own media and politicians have become more critical of Ireland and Irish law castigating us as ‘less progressive’, ‘ultra conservative’ and even ‘barbarous’ in our laws and attitudes on the whole issue of prenatal care and abortion availability. Why? Because we will not allow the deliberate destruction of our offspring before they are born. Countries such as Canada, the USA, Denmark, the UK to name a few, and those of our own political parties whose policies support abortion by mothers choice up to birth. Canada’s official rules for its hospitals and clinics that carry out abortions are that any child surviving such be left unfed and uncared for until he/she dies.

The number of such cases must be recorded and placed in public record. The number is in the hundreds yearly. In the UK the official figures are that 90% of all prenatal diagnosed Downs Syndrome humans are 'terminated'. This is likely to increase with recent more efficient and free diagnoses. In Denmark the figure is 98%, and Denmark's government policy is to have the country 100% Downs free by 2030. In the USA some clinics sell the body parts of aborted babies by techniques that prevent damage to the more 'valuable' and saleable organs. Some of Planned Parenthood clinics already federally funded yearly to the tune of some ¾ Billion is one example. Likewise partial birth abortions are legal in some states. There are indeed very few countries worldwide where some form of abortion is not allowed by Law. Even here in Ireland the push to extend the practise to the final goal of legal abortion in any or all circumstances is already continuous and relentless. Which of the above named, self proclaimed, **civilised** and **progressive** societies, are we to emulate. They want us to Repeal the Eighth Amendment. If this is a necessity to join the ranks of progressive democracies we must say 'No Thanks' and retain our own constitutional protection of our unborn children.

  
Milo F. Connolly



12/12/2016

14 DEC 2016

**Submission to Citizens' Assembly  
December 2016**

The Citizens' Assembly has been asked to consider a referendum to repeal the right to life of the unborn child as protected under the 8th amendment to the Constitution. As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

The 8th amendment guarantees the equal right to life of both women and their unborn children. The 8th was approved by the people in 1983 and, since that time, has saved an estimated 250,000 lives because our abortion rate has remained much lower than that of countries with +legalised abortion. In Britain for example, one in every five babies is killed by abortion. In Ireland that figure is one in every twenty. If we had Britain's abortion rate we would see 10,000 more abortions every year – or 30 more every day. No reasonable person would welcome more abortions.

The 8th amendment ensures the protection of the most basic human rights. Science tells us that preborn babies are human beings, and therefore deserving of the same protections that all humans enjoy. At 21 days gestation, our hearts are already beating. Every abortion ends a human life.

The 8th amendment protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. In fact, as top medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.

Abortion also hurts women. A 2008 study (Fergusson et al) found that post-abortive women are 30% more likely to experience serious mental health problems while a 2006 study (Gissler et al) found that the suicide rate for post-abortive women was six times higher than women who had given birth.

Abortion not only has negative effects on women, but it is also a cruel and inhumane practice towards the unborn. These children are dismembered and removed piece by piece or given a lethal injection directly into their hearts. This practice is both medieval and barbaric.

Because of our law, babies with disabilities and severe life limiting conditions are guaranteed the same protections as every other child. While abortion activists treat these children as if they were already dead, the fact is that most babies, even the most severe cases, live after birth and their families find their time together enormously healing. Parents of these babies recognize their children's lives as precious and say that improved perinatal hospice care, not abortion, is what they need.

Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. I urge you to consider this carefully, and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

Please protect the 8th amendment.

Thank you!

Name:

*Roddy Finnie*

Address



14 DEC 2016

143

Name: ROSALEEN DENNIN

Address:

E. MAIL:

Topic: The Eighth Amendment.

Title of Submission:

Retain the Eighth Amendment.

Comments:

Please do not remove the 8th Amendment. In my nursing career I cared for many mothers who had miscarriages. I gave them the best care and support. We, as nurses would bring the tiny baby

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perhaps 12-16 weeks gestation,  
to the mother's bedside.

The parents would then  
choose a name for their  
baby & if they wished I  
would give it a Lay  
Baptism. This helped them  
to grieve their loss.

Every pregnant woman will  
grieve the loss of her baby.

If it is intentionally  
killed in the womb through  
abortion, how much more  
will she grieve. We have  
no right to end the life  
of the unborn baby even  
if it has a disability.

I have nursed mothers  
who had Anencephalic babies.  
They were given the opportunity



to hold their<sup>45</sup> baby, have the baby christened if they wished, take photos & allow their other children to come & be involved in this little baby's short life. What a contrast to brutally killing it in the womb. In countries where abortion is legalized, many babies with mild disability i.e. Down's Syndrome are aborted. Please look at all these statistics.

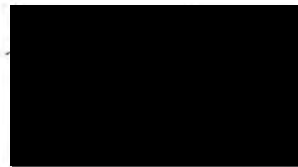
I now work in Palliative Care & we care for patients until natural death. We support families through their grief and many hearts are healed as families

await the final moment  
of passing.

"There is a time to be  
Born and a time to Die"  
God Bless you all.

Roselean Dearing.

Address



Members of the Citizens Assembly

As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

The 8<sup>th</sup> amendment is a piece of legislation that ensures the protection of the most basic human rights. Science tells us that preborn babies are human beings and deserving of the protection of society. At 21 days gestation, our hearts are already beating. Every abortion ends a human life.

Abortion also hurts women. A 2008 study (Fergusson et al) found that post-abortive women are 30% more likely to experience serious mental health problems while a 2006 study (Gissler et al) found that the suicide rate for post-abortive women was six times higher than women who had given birth.

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I urge you to consider this carefully and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members and the unborn has a right to life.

Please protect that 8<sup>th</sup> amendment.

Thank you.

Anne Kerrigan

15 DEC 2016

04/12/16

Members of the Citizens Assembly

As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

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Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights and the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment is a testament to that. I urge you to consider this carefully and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

Please protect that 8<sup>th</sup> amendment.

Thank you.



15 DEC 2016

## Submission to Citizens' Assembly December 2016

The Citizens' Assembly has been asked to consider a referendum to repeal the right to life of the unborn child as protected under the 8th amendment to the Constitution. As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

The 8th amendment guarantees the equal right to life of both women and their unborn children. The 8th was approved by the people in 1983 and, since that time, has saved an estimated 250,000 lives because our abortion rate has remained much lower than that of countries with legalised abortion. In Britain for example, one in every five babies is killed by abortion. In Ireland that figure is one in every twenty. If we had Britain's abortion rate we would see 10,000 more abortions every year – or 30 more every day. No reasonable person would welcome more abortions.

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The 8th amendment protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. In fact, as top medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.

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Abortion not only has negative effects on women, but it is also a cruel and inhumane practice towards the unborn. These children are dismembered and removed piece by piece or given a lethal injection directly into their hearts. This practice is both medieval and barbaric.

Because of our law, babies with disabilities and severe life limiting conditions are guaranteed the same protections as every other child. While abortion activists treat these children as if they were already dead, the fact is that most babies, even the most severe cases, live after birth and their families find their time together enormously healing. Parents of these babies recognize their children's lives as precious and say that improved perinatal hospice care, not abortion, is what they need.

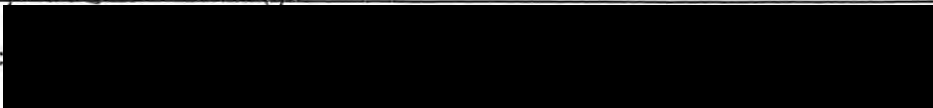
Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. I urge you to consider this carefully, and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

Please protect the 8th amendment.

11 5 DEC 2016

Thank you!

Name: Barbara O'Boyle

Address: 

13<sup>th</sup> Dec 2016

To whom it may concern,  
I do not agree with amending the current legislation on the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

Both the lives of the mother and baby have to be treated equally. Adoption should be promoted.

Ireland has a first class safety record in looking after pregnant women. A baby's heart beats just 21 days after conception.

When abortion is introduced into a country after a while a very sinister comment is made on the value of human life.

Yours sincerely,  
Barry Hoag.

15 DEC 2016

**SUBMISSION TO THE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY**

Dear Members of the Citizens' Assembly,

One of the most crucial issues that the Citizens' Assembly has been asked to consider is that of a potential referendum to repeal the 8th amendment of the Constitution.

The 8th amendment guarantees the equal right to life of both women and their unborn children. The 8th was approved by the people in 1983 and, since that time, has saved more than **250,000 lives**. 250,000 Irish people are alive today because our pro-life laws recognize the worth and dignity of every human person.

Because of our law, all citizens are given an equal – it does not allow our society to discriminate against children because of disabilities, or gender, or size, or just because they are considered "unwanted". The 8th protects the most basic human right - the right to life - of these children and their mothers.

The 8th amendment allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving treatment to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. In fact, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.

Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights, and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. We recognise that no one should have the right to decide whether another person can live or die.

Societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members. Ireland should continue to protect the most vulnerable among us.

On my behalf, and on behalf of all those smallest of citizens who are relying on adults to protect them, save the 8th amendment.

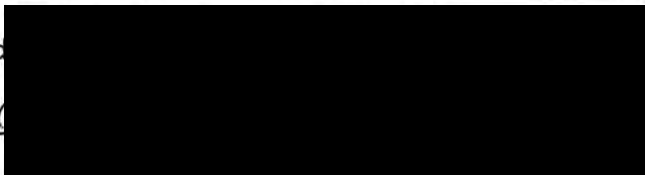
Sincerely,

Signature: *Catherine O'Mallon*

**19 5 DEC 2016**

Name: *Catherine O'Mallon*

Add



## Retain The 8th Amendment

The 8th Amendment guarantees the equal right to life of both mothers and their unborn children. I am very disappointed and saddened to hear of the possibility of this Amendment being repealed.

Abortion is the removal of the basic human right - the right to life. Every child born or unborn has the right to life including those children with life-limiting conditions and those conceived through rape or incest. While rape and incest are horrific crimes, nothing can justify the killing of the innocent unborn babies in any such case.

I write from both a personal and a professional aspect on abortion from the grounds of foetal abnormalities. I have the most amazing little cousin who has Down Syndrome. He brings joy and delight to our lives each and every day and I could not imagine life without him.

I am a learning disability nurse and work with people who have disabilities ranging from mild to severe. Each and every person I have had the pleasure of working with has positively impacted my life. They are not a burden to be aborted from the womb before they have had a chance to live. Life begins from the moment of conception therefore their rights begin at that point. The nursing code clearly sets out our responsibilities as professionals and one standard includes our responsibility 'to make every ~~decision~~ valid and reasonable effort to protect the life and health of pregnant women and their unborn babies'.

We fight for inclusion, for discrimination to be eliminated, for people with disabilities to lead a full and meaningful life. How can we do this if abortion is allowed?! How can we fight for them if many are saying they are unwanted in the first place?!

God is very clear in the Bible about the value of the unborn child. He knew us before we were born (Jeremiah 1:5), he knit us together in our mother's womb (Psalm 139:13), created in His own image (Genesis 1:27). Every life matters, whether born or ~~unborn~~ still in the womb. God gives life and forbids taking innocent lives - You shall not murder (Exodus 20:13), do not shed innocent blood (Jeremiah 7:6). God forbids abortion.

Abortion kills babies and hurts women. A study <sup>13 DEC 2016</sup> in <sup>land</sup> by Milka Gissler in 1997 found that the suicide rate among women who had undergone abortions in the prior year was three times higher compared to women in the general population and six times higher than women who gave birth. A follow up study by Gissler in 2014 found no statistically significant decrease in the suicide rate.

I wholeheartedly believe the 8th Amendment should be retained. It protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world. Furthermore it protects the unborn child, a tiny human being, who has the basic right to life.



**SUBMISSION TO:**  
**Justice Mary Laffoy**  
**and members of the Citizens' Assembly,**  
**16 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.**

**I wish to make some of my views known,**

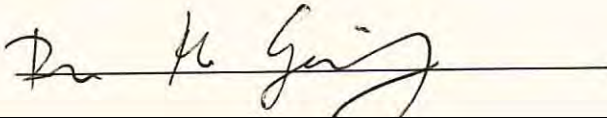
1. The 8th Amendment guarantees the equal right to life of **both** mothers and their unborn children.
2. The 8th Amendment protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.
3. Leading medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws.
4. The inquest findings on the sad death of Savita Halappanavar, who died in 2012, found that her death was due to medical misadventure and was not related to the 8th Amendment.
5. Countless lives of unborn children have been saved since 1983 because of the 8th Amendment.
6. Every child **born or unborn** has the right to life including those children with life-limiting conditions and those conceived through rape or incest.



- 7. **Rape and incest are horrific crimes**, but nothing can justify the killing of the **innocent unborn baby** in any such case.
- 8. **Because of the 8th Amendment, the equal right to life of babies with disabilities and those with severe life-limiting conditions is guaranteed, and given the same protection as every other child.**
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**I wish to RETAIN the 8th AMENDMENT,**

**Yours sincerely,**



**Address:**

**Telephone:**

**Email:**

15 DEC 2014

Comments (500 word maximum): I wish to retain the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment for all reasons outlined on this leaflet.

Additional information:

Name: DANN Y Kelly

15 DEC 2016

Email: .....

I do not have an email address and am happy to use [donegalprolife123@gmail.com](mailto:donegalprolife123@gmail.com)

Address:

Organisation:

Topic: The 8th Amendment of the Constitution

Title of Submission: **RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT**

**LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD**  
**DONEGAL PRO LIFE**

SUBMISSIONS CAN BE MADE BY  
email to: [info@citizensassembly.ie](mailto:info@citizensassembly.ie)  
Online at [www.citizensassembly.ie](http://www.citizensassembly.ie)  
or send by post before the  
Monday 12<sup>th</sup>, December to:

Citizens' Assembly  
16 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.



**SUBMISSION TO:**  
**Justice Mary Laffoy and**  
**members of the Citizens' Assembly.**



**The 8th Amendment of the Constitution should be retained for the following reasons:**

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15 DEC 2016

## Submission to Citizens' Assembly December 2016

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The 8th amendment guarantees the equal right to life of both women and their unborn children. The 8th was approved by the people in 1983 and, since that time, has saved an estimated 250,000 lives because our abortion rate has remained much lower than that of countries with legalised abortion. In Britain for example, one in every five babies is killed by abortion. In Ireland that figure is one in every twenty. If we had Britain's abortion rate we would see 10,000 more abortions every year – or 30 more every day. No reasonable person would welcome more abortions.

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Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. I urge you to consider this carefully, and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

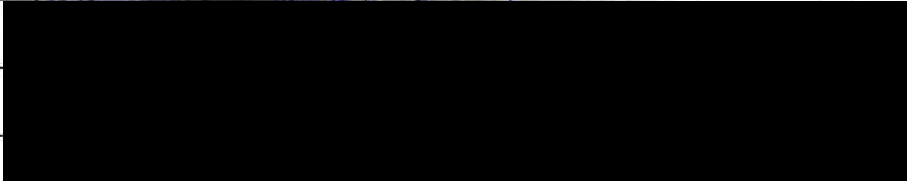
Please protect the 8th amendment.

Thank you!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*Eileen Dwyer*

Address: \_\_\_\_\_



13/12/16

**Submission to Citizens' Assembly, 16 Parnell Sq, Dublin 1.  
December 2016**

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The 8th amendment ensures the protection of the most basic human rights. Science tells us that preborn babies are human beings, and therefore deserving of the same protections that all humans enjoy. At 21 days gestation, our hearts are already beating. Every abortion ends a human life.

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Abortion also hurts women. A 2008 study (Fergusson et al) found that post-abortive women are 30% more likely to experience serious mental health problems while a 2006 study (Gissler et al) found that the suicide rate for post-abortive women was six times higher than women who had given birth.

Abortion not only has negative effects on women, but it is also a cruel and inhumane practice towards the unborn. These children are dismembered and removed piece by piece or given a lethal injection directly into their hearts. This practice is both medieval and barbaric.

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Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. I urge you to consider this carefully, and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

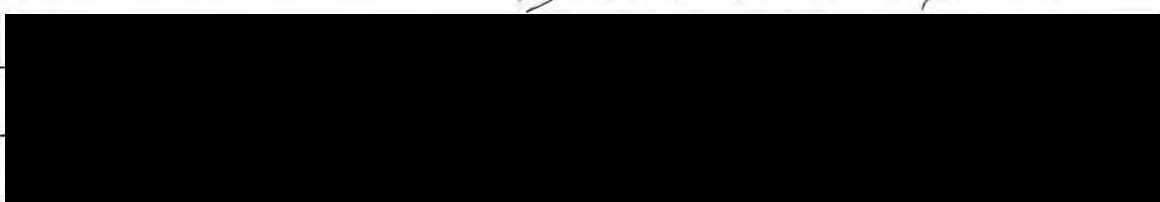
Please protect the 8th amendment.

Thank you!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED :-  
*[Handwritten Signature]*



75 000 0015

## Submission to Citizens' Assembly December 2016

The Citizens' Assembly has been asked to consider a referendum to repeal the right to life of the unborn child as protected under the 8th amendment to the Constitution. As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

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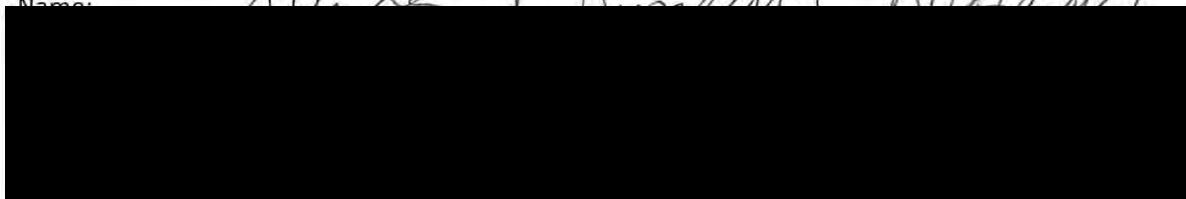
Please protect the 8th amendment.

11 5 DEC 2016

Thank you!

Name:

*James Duggan (Nurse)*



**SUBMISSION TO:**

159

**Justice Mary Laffoy and  
members of the Citizens' Assembly.**



**The 8th Amendment of the Constitution should be retained for the following reasons:**

- The 8th Amendment guarantees the equal right to life of **both** mothers and their unborn children.
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Comments (500 word maximum): I wish to retain the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment for all reasons outlined on this leaflet.

15 DEC 2016

Additional information:

Name: Joan Gallagher

Email: .....

I do not have an email address and am happy to use donegalprolife123@gmail.com

Address: [Redacted]

Organisation: Father Sweeney

Topic: The 8th Amendment of the Constitution

Title of Submission: **RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT**

**LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD  
DONEGAL PRO LIFE**

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Monday 12<sup>th</sup>. December to:

Citizens' Assembly  
16 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.







12<sup>th</sup> December 2016

SUBMISSION TO THE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY

I would like to inform the Citizens' Assembly that I am totally against any change to the eight amendment to the Irish Constitution which protects the right to life of the unborn baby i.e. male or female human being like you or me with equal right to life of this human being's mother who is carrying this innocent child and sustaining it in her womb until it is ready to come out into this world.

The eight amendment is a piece of legislation that ensures the protection of the most basic human right – the right to life - . Every human being in my view has a right to life and those in their mother's womb have to be constantly protected in our Constitution as well as their mother.

My observation is that so called pro-choice people in our society choose to ignore the fact that there is no choice when it comes to the baby in the mother's womb because if they choose abortion the child i.e. their son or daughter dies and this is totally wrong.

We also hear of difficult cases in our society where the girl has been raped or some other problem or problems occur in the mother's life and I have total sympathy with these people and think that they should be supported and helped in every way possible by our society but abortion is not a solution because with abortion as I have already outlined earlier their baby son or daughter dies. This in my view is totally wrong.

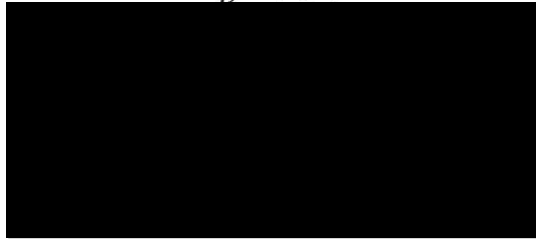
Finally I would like to say that I believe in God and the fifth commandment in the bible states "Thou shalt not kill".

*Mary Wiseman*  
Mary Wiseman

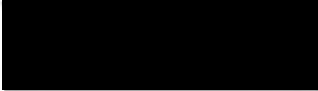
15 DEC 2016

Amendments to constitutions are normally made to clarify, improve or strengthen citizens' rights. Repealing the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment however, is about removing from our constitution the fundamental right of the unborn, without children all other rights are irrelevant. This is hardly conducive to a just and equal society

Olive Maher



15 DEC 2016



Address

Members of the Citizens Assembly

As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

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I urge you to consider this carefully and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

Please protect that 8<sup>th</sup> amendment.

Thank you.

Patricia H. Cronin

15 DEC 2016

**Submission to Citizens' Assembly  
December 2016**

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15 DEC 2016

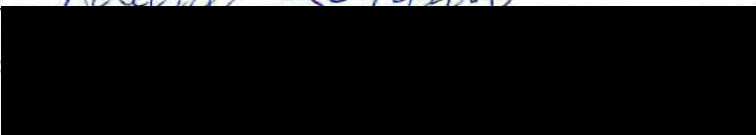
Please protect the 8th amendment.

Thank you!

Name:

*Rosanne Lordan*

Address:



Address



Members of the Citizens Assembly

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I urge you to consider this carefully and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members and the unborn has a right to life.

Please protect that 8<sup>th</sup> amendment.

Thank you.

Sean Brett

17 5 DEC 2016



**Justice Mary Laffoy and  
members of the Citizens' Assembly.**

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Additional information:

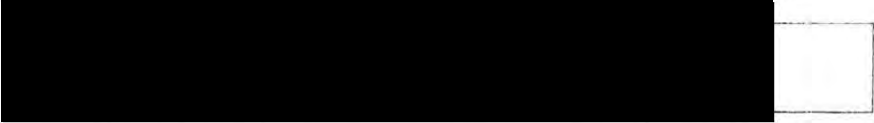
15 DEC 2016

Name: TERESA MCCANN

Email:.....

I do not have an email address and am happy to use donegalprolife123@gmail.com

Address:



Organisation:

FOR SWEENEY

Topic: The 8th Amendment of the Constitution

Title of Submission: RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD  
DONEGAL PRO LIFE

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Citizens' Assembly  
16 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.



Comments (500 word maximum): I wish to retain the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment for all reasons outlined on this leaflet.

Additional information:

Name: Sisling Mc Grath.....

Email:.....

I do not have an email address and am happy to use donegalprolife123@gmail.com

Address:

Organisation:

Topic: The 8th Amendment of the Constitution

Title of Submission: **RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT**

15 DEC 2016

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**SUBMISSION TO:  
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Comments (500 word maximum): I wish to retain the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment for all reasons outlined on this leaflet.

15 DEC 2016

Additional information:

Name: Amy Johnston

Email: [REDACTED]

I do not have an email address and am happy to use donegalprolife25@gmail.com

Address: [REDACTED]

Organisation: [REDACTED]

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Title of Submission: **RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT**

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**SPEAK  
OUT  
TO  
SAVE  
LIVES**



169

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169

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Additional information:

Name: ANDREW ALC CARROLL

15 DEC 2016

Email: [redacted]

I do not have an email address and am happy to use donegalprolife123@gmail.com

Address: [redacted]

Organisation: [redacted]

Topic: The 8th Amendment of the Constitution

Title of Submission: RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT

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Additional information:

Name: Ann Lewis

Email: .....

I do not have an email address and am happy to use donegalprolife123@gmail.com

Address

Organisation:

Topic: The 8th Amendment of the Constitution

Title of Submission: **RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT**

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15 DEC 2016

## SUBMISSION TO: Justice Mary Laffoy and members of the Citizens' Assembly.



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Additional information:

Name: Aine Laffoy

Email: .....

I do not have an email address and am happy to use [donegalprolife123@gmail.com](mailto:donegalprolife123@gmail.com)

Address:

Organisation:

Topic: The 8th Amendment of the Constitution

Title of Submission: **RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT**

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172

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172

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Additional information:

Name: ANNE BRADLEY

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I do not have an email address and am happy to use donegalprolife123@gmail.com

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic: The 8th Amendment of the Constitution

Title of Submission: **RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT**

15 DEC 2016

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Monday 12<sup>th</sup>, December to:  
**Citizens' Assembly**  
16 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.



**SUBMISSION TO:  
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**The 8th Amendment of the Constitution should be  
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Comments (500 word maximum): I wish to retain the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment for all reasons outlined on this leaflet.

Additional information:

Name: ANNIE KELLY

15 DEC 2016

Email: .....

I do not have an email address and am happy to use donegalprolife123@gmail.com

Address: [Redacted]

Organisation: [Redacted]

Topic: The 8th Amendment of the Constitution

Title of Submission: **RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT**

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Additional information:

Name: Anthony Donegan

15 DEC 2016

Email: I do not have an email address and am happy to use donegalprolife123@gmail.com

Address: [Redacted]

Organisation: [Redacted]

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Additional information:

Name: HOIFE WASH

15 DEC 2016

Email:.....

I do not have an email address and am happy to use donegalprolife123@gmail.com

Address: [REDACTED]

Organisation: [REDACTED]

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Additional information:

15 DEC 2016

Name: Brendan Curran

Email: .....  
I do not have an email address and am happy to use donegalprolife123@gmail.com

Address:

Organisation:

Topic: The 8th Amendment of the Constitution

Title of Submission: **RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT**

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Additional information:

Name: BRIAN BOUCE

Email: .....

I do not have an email address and am happy to use [donegalprolife123@gmail.com](mailto:donegalprolife123@gmail.com)

Address: [Redacted]

Organisation: [Redacted]

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Additional information:

Name:..... *Brian Gallagher* .....

Email:.....  
I do not have an email address and am happy to use [donegalprolife123@gmail.com](mailto:donegalprolife123@gmail.com)

Address:

Organisation:

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Comments (500 word maximum): I wish to retain the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment for all reasons outlined on this leaflet.

Additional information:

15 DEC 2018

Name: Brian Mc Coenick

Email: .....  
I do not have an email address and am happy to use donegalprolife123@gmail.com

Address: [Redacted]

Organisation: [Redacted]

Topic: The 8th Amendment of the Constitution

Title of Submission: **RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT**

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**Submission to Citizens' Assembly  
December 2016**

The Citizens' Assembly has been asked to consider a referendum to repeal the right to life of the unborn child as protected under the 8th amendment to the Constitution. As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

The 8th amendment guarantees the equal right to life of both women and their unborn children. The 8th was approved by the people in 1983 and, since that time, has saved an estimated 250,000 lives because our abortion rate has remained much lower than that of countries with legalised abortion. In Britain for example, one in every five babies is killed by abortion. In Ireland that figure is one in every twenty. If we had Britain's abortion rate we would see 10,000 more abortions every year – or 30 more every day. No reasonable person would welcome more abortions.

The 8th amendment ensures the protection of the most basic human rights. Science tells us that preborn babies are human beings, and therefore deserving of the same protections that all humans enjoy. At 21 days gestation, our hearts are already beating. Every abortion ends a human life.

The 8th amendment protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. In fact, as top medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.

Abortion also hurts women. A 2008 study (Fergusson et al) found that post-abortive women are 30% more likely to experience serious mental health problems while a 2006 study (Gissler et al) found that the suicide rate for post-abortive women was six times higher than women who had given birth.

Abortion not only has negative effects on women, but it is also a cruel and inhumane practice towards the unborn. These children are dismembered and removed piece by piece or given a lethal injection directly into their hearts. This practice is both medieval and barbaric.

Because of our law, babies with disabilities and severe life limiting conditions are guaranteed the same protections as every other child. While abortion activists treat these children as if they were already dead, the fact is that most babies, even the most severe cases, live after birth and their families find their time together enormously healing. Parents of these babies recognize their children's lives as precious and say that improved perinatal hospice care, not abortion, is what they need.

Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. I urge you to consider this carefully, and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

Please protect the 8th amendment.

Thank you!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*Anna King*

Address: \_\_\_\_\_



16 DEC 2016

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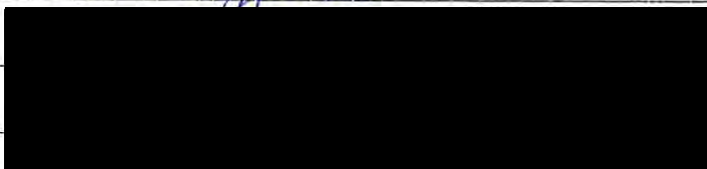
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Thank you!

Name: *Aine Heffernan*

Address: 

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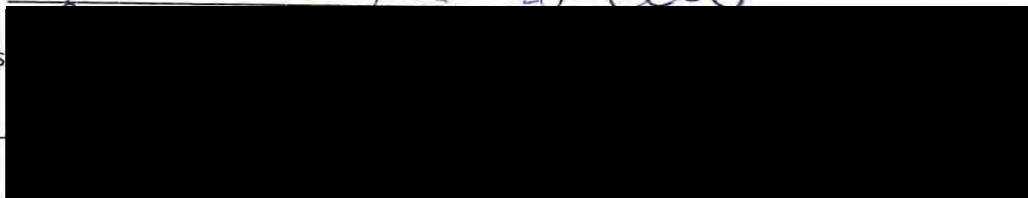
Please protect the 8th amendment.

Thank you!

Name:

*Deanne A. Keenan*

Address



16 DEC 2016

The Citizens' Assembly is inviting submissions on the first topic the Assembly will consider, **the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution.**

**Submissions can be made online or by post to Citizens Assembly, 16 Parnell Square, Dublin 1, to arrive no later than 16 December 2016.**

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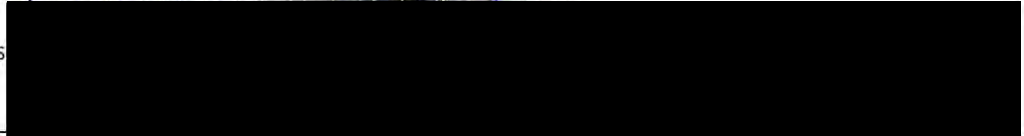
Please protect the 8th amendment.

Thank you!

Name:

*Bernadette Farrell*

Address



16 DEC 2016



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Please protect the 8th amendment.

Thank you!

Name:

*Bernadette Ganley*

Address:



16 DEC 2016

# Childrens Protection Society



8 December 2016.

**Catherine Hayes,**  
Member,  
The Citizen's Assembly,  
12 Parnell Square,  
Dublin 1.

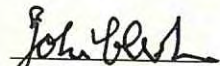
RE:- Please look at our

**Read-in-40-Seconds**



**Submission on the Constitutional Amendment to prevent  
killing Children before Birth.**

Yours Gratefully

  
John Clerkin  
Chairman

ATT: COPY OF SUBMISSION

16 DEC 2016



- The then Chief Rabbi of the Commonwealth, Lord Jakobovits, said in a radio broadcast in 1989 that the killing of children before birth is “comparable” to the Holocaust.
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John Clerkin, Children's Protection Society  
10 May 2016 35 Wellington Road, Dublin 6w

## Killing Children

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**Submission to Citizens' Assembly  
December 2016**

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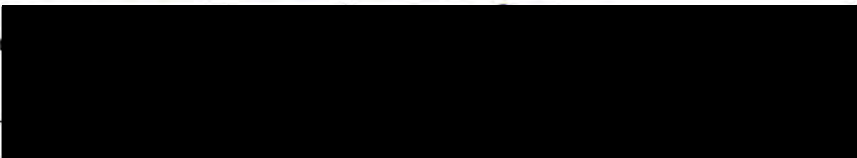
Please protect the 8th amendment.

Thank you!  
Name:

*Christa McDonnell*

16 DEC 2016

Add



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Please protect the 8th amendment.

Thank you!

Name: Cornelius & Madeline Dwyer.

Add  \_\_\_\_\_

*As two nurses - we support the life of the unborn child & every person.*

16 DEC 2016

**SUBMISSION TO:  
Justice Mary Laffoy and  
members of the Citizens' Assembly.**



**The 8th Amendment of the Constitution should be retained for the following reasons:**

- The 8th Amendment guarantees the equal right to life of **both** mothers and their unborn children.
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Comments (500 word maximum): I wish to retain the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment for all reasons outlined on this leaflet.

Additional information:

Name: Denise Walsh.....

Email:.....

I do not have an email address and am happy to use donegalprolife123@gmail.com

Address:

Organisation:

Topic: The 8th Amendment of the Constitution

Title of Submission: **RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT**

**LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD  
DONEGAL PRO LIFE**

SUBMISSIONS CAN BE MADE BY  
email to: [info@citizensassembly.ie](mailto:info@citizensassembly.ie)  
Online at [www.citizensassembly.ie](http://www.citizensassembly.ie)  
or send by post before the  
Monday 12<sup>th</sup>. December to:

Citizens' Assembly  
16 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.



16 DEC 2010

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Thank you!

Name: Elizabeth Cosgrove

Address: 

17 6 DEC 2016

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Address: 

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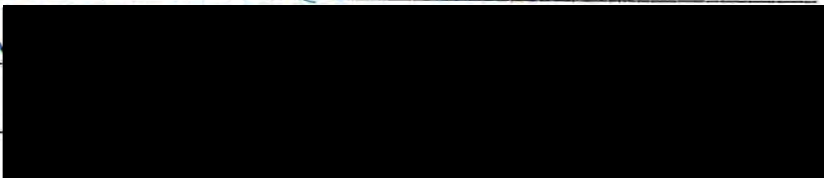
Please protect the 8th amendment.

Thank you!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*Evelyn Maria Burns*

Address: \_\_\_\_\_



16 DEC 2016

# Childrens Protection Society



8 December 2016.

**Glen Kiernan,**  
Member,  
The Citizen's Assembly,  
12 Parnell Square,  
Dublin 1.

RE:- Please look at our

## **Read-in-40-Seconds**

**Submission on the Constitutional Amendment to prevent  
killing Children before Birth.**

Yours Gratefully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Clerkin".

John Clerkin  
Chairman

ATT: COPY OF SUBMISSION

16 DEC 2016

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John Clerkin, Children's Protection Society  
10 May 2016 35 Wellington Road, Dublin 6w

## Killing Children

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They can trust no adult.  
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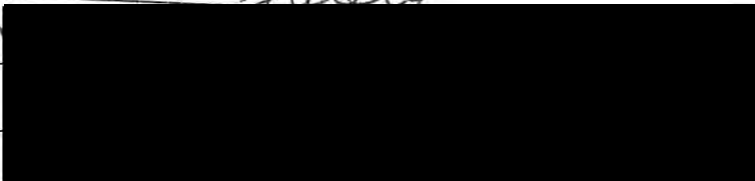
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Please protect the 8th amendment.

Thank you!

Name: Helen Grotale

Address: 

16 DEC 2016



**SUBMISSION TO:  
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members of the Citizens' Assembly.**



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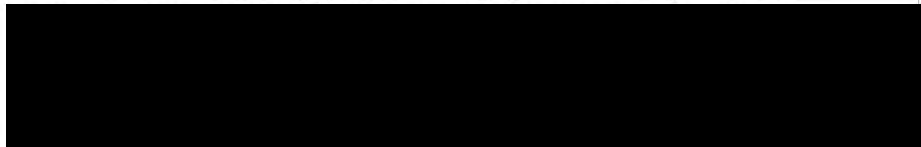
**Name:**.....*Helena Walsh*.....

16 DEC 2016

**Email:**.....

I do not have an email address and am happy to use [donegalprolife123@gmail.com](mailto:donegalprolife123@gmail.com)

**Address:**



**Organisation:**

*House wife.*

**Topic:** The 8th Amendment of the Constitution

**Title of Submission:** **RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT**

**LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD  
DONEGAL PRO LIFE**

**SUBMISSIONS CAN BE MADE BY**  
email to: [info@citizensassembly.ie](mailto:info@citizensassembly.ie)  
Online at [www.citizensassembly.ie](http://www.citizensassembly.ie)  
or send by post before the  
Monday 12<sup>th</sup>, December to:

**Citizens' Assembly**  
**16 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.**



To :-

The Citizens Assembly.

I wish to object to the attempt  
to repeal the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment.

It is the murder of a baby, no  
matter how you try to defend a killing.

Sincerely,

Jean Murray.

Radiographer

Trained S.V.H Dublin

Staff Kings College Hosp. /

London. S.W.

16 DEC. 2016

# Childrens Protection Society



8 December 2016.

**John J. Keogh,**  
Member,  
The Citizen's Assembly,  
12 Parnell Square,  
Dublin 1.

RE:- Please look at our

**Read-in-40-Seconds**

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Yours Gratefully

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16 DEC 2016

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They can trust no adult.

Children are far closer to the very young.

They used not to be told even of the death of some animals. So they do not trust doctors and fear hospitals more.

# Childrens Protection Society



8 December 2016.

**Kevin Kilkelly,**  
Member,  
The Citizen's Assembly,  
12 Parnell Square,  
Dublin 1.

RE:- Please look at our

## **Read-in-40-Seconds**

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**Submission on the Constitutional Amendment to prevent  
killing Children before Birth.**

Yours Gratefully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Clerkin'.

John Clerkin  
Chairman

ATT: COPY OF SUBMISSION

16 DEC 2016

- The then Chief Rabbi of the Commonwealth, Lord Jakobovits, said in a radio broadcast in 1989 that the killing of children before birth is “comparable” to the Holocaust.
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John Clerkin, Children's Protection Society  
10 May 2016 35 Wellington Road, Dublin 6w

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16 DEC 2016

To whom it concerns

It is essential that the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment stays in place because it guarantees in law the equal right to life of women and their unborn babies. Without it there is no law for the unborn baby from abortion, and abortion harms women (see Fergusson et al 2008 and Gissler et al 2006) and that extends to families and society. Post abortive mothers are 30% more likely to experience serious mental health issues whilst the 2006 study found that the suicide rate for women after abortion was 6 times higher than amongst women who had given birth. God gives life and only He has the right to take it away, let's support a culture of life, let's keep the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment. Kelly O'Sullivan

**Submission to Citizens' Assembly  
December 2016**

The Citizens' Assembly has been asked to consider a referendum to repeal the right to life of the unborn child as protected under the 8th amendment to the Constitution. As an Irish citizen who strongly believes in the value of every human life, this prospect causes me great concern.

The 8th amendment guarantees the equal right to life of both women and their unborn children. The 8th was approved by the people in 1983 and, since that time, has saved an estimated 250,000 lives because our abortion rate has remained much lower than that of countries with legalised abortion. In Britain for example, one in every five babies is killed by abortion. In Ireland that figure is one in every twenty. If we had Britain's abortion rate we would see 10,000 more abortions every year – or 30 more every day. No reasonable person would welcome more abortions.

The 8th amendment ensures the protection of the most basic human rights. Science tells us that preborn babies are human beings, and therefore deserving of the same protections that all humans enjoy. At 21 days gestation, our hearts are already beating. Every abortion ends a human life.

The 8th amendment protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. In fact, as top medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.

Abortion also hurts women. A 2008 study (Fergusson et al) found that post-abortive women are 30% more likely to experience serious mental health problems while a 2006 study (Gissler et al) found that the suicide rate for post-abortive women was six times higher than women who had given birth.

Abortion not only has negative effects on women, but it is also a cruel and inhumane practice towards the unborn. These children are dismembered and removed piece by piece or given a lethal injection directly into their hearts. This practice is both medieval and barbaric.

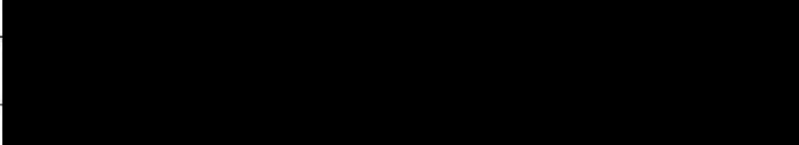
Because of our law, babies with disabilities and severe life limiting conditions are guaranteed the same protections as every other child. While abortion activists treat these children as if they were already dead, the fact is that most babies, even the most severe cases, live after birth and their families find their time together enormously healing. Parents of these babies recognize their children's lives as precious and say that improved perinatal hospice care, not abortion, is what they need.

Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. I urge you to consider this carefully, and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

Please protect the 8th amendment.

Thank you!

Name: Margaret Welster

Address: 

17 DEC 2016

7. **Rape and incest are horrific crimes, but nothing can justify the killing of the innocent unborn baby in any such case.**
8. **Because of the 8th Amendment, the equal right to life of babies with disabilities and those with severe life-limiting conditions is guaranteed, and given the same protection as every other child.**
9. **Abortion kills babies and hurts women.** A study in Finland by Mika Gissler in 1997 found that the **suicide rate among women who had undergone abortions** in the prior year was **three times higher** compared to women in the general population and **six times higher** compared to women who gave birth. A follow-up study by Gissler in 2014 found no statistically significant decrease in the suicide rate

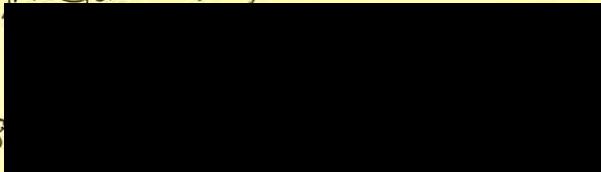
**I wish to RETAIN the 8th AMENDMENT,**

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Mary Mulpetel

16 DEC 2016

**Address:** Donaghue Heights



**Telephone:** 08

**Email:**

213

**SUBMISSION TO:**  
**Justice Mary Laffoy**  
**and members of the Citizens' Assembly,**  
**16 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.**

**I wish to make some of my views known,**

1. The 8th Amendment guarantees the equal right to life of **both** mothers and their unborn children.
2. The 8th Amendment protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.
3. Leading medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws.
4. The inquest findings on the sad death of Savita Halappanavar, who died in 2012, found that her death was due to medical misadventure and was not related to the 8th Amendment.
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14th December  
2016

To Members of the Citizens' Assembly.

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The 8<sup>th</sup> amendment guarantees the equal right to life of both women and their unborn children. The 8<sup>th</sup> was approved by the people in 1983 and, since then has saved and estimated 250,000 lives because our abortion rate has remained much lower than that of countries with legalised abortion.

The 8<sup>th</sup> amendment is a piece of legislation that ensures the protection of the most basic human rights. Science tells us that preborn babies are human beings and deserving of the protection of society. At 21 days gestation our hearts are already beating which means that every abortion ends a human life.

Abortion also hurts women. A 2008 study (Fergusson et al) found that post abortive women are 30% more likely to experience serious mental health problems while a 2006 study (Gissler et al) found that the suicide rate for post abortive women was six times higher than women who had given birth.

Abortion does not only have negative effects on women but it is also a cruel and inhumane practice towards the unborn child. These children are dismembered and removed piece by piece or else given a lethal injection directly into their hearts. This practice is both medieval and barbaric.

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Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights and the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment is a testament to that. I urge you to consider this carefully and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

Please protect the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment.

Thank you,

*Maurice Shinnick*

17 6 DEC 2016

# Childrens Protection Society



8 December 2016.

**Neal Kinsella,**  
Member,  
The Citizen's Assembly,  
12 Parnell Square,  
Dublin 1.

RE:- Please look at our

**Read-in-40-Seconds**



**Submission on the Constitutional Amendment to prevent  
killing Children before Birth.**

Yours Gratefully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Clerkin'.

John Clerkin  
Chairman

ATT: COPY OF SUBMISSION

16 DEC 2016

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John Clerkin, **Children's Protection Society**  
10 May 2016 35 Wellington Road, Dublin 6w

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# Childrens Protection Society



8 December 2016.

**Neasa Keogh,**  
Member,  
The Citizen's Assembly,  
12 Parnell Square,  
Dublin 1.

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**Read-in-40-Seconds**

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10 May 2016 35 Wellington Road, Dublin 6w

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**Noelle Kelly,**  
Member,  
The Citizen's Assembly,  
12 Parnell Square,  
Dublin 1.

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Chairman

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10 May 2016 35 Wellington Road, Dublin 6w

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**I wish to RETAIN the 8th AMENDMENT,**

16 DEC 2016

**Yours sincerely,**

Patrick Pearse Kelly

**Address:**

**Telephone**

**Email:**



**SUBMISSION TO:**  
**Justice Mary Laffoy**  
**and members of the Citizens' Assembly,**  
**16 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.**

**I wish to make some of my views known,**

1. The 8th Amendment guarantees the equal right to life of **both** mothers and their unborn children.
2. The 8th Amendment protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.
3. Leading medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws.
4. The inquest findings on the sad death of Savita Halappanavar, who died in 2012, found that her death was due to medical misadventure and was not related to the 8th Amendment.
5. Countless lives of unborn children have been saved since 1983 because of the 8th Amendment.
6. Every child **born or unborn** has the right to life including those children with life-limiting conditions and those conceived through rape or incest.



**SUBMISSION TO:  
Justice Mary Laffoy and  
members of the Citizens' Assembly.**



**The 8th Amendment of the Constitution should be retained for the following reasons:**

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Comments (500 word maximum): I wish to retain the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment for all reasons outlined on this leaflet.

Additional information:

Name: *Philomena Walsh* ..... 16 DEC 2016

Email: .....

I do not have an email address and am happy to use [donegalprolife123@gmail.com](mailto:donegalprolife123@gmail.com)

Address:

Organisation

Topic: The 8<sup>th</sup>

Title of Submission: **RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT**

**LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD  
DONEGAL PRO LIFE**

SUBMISSIONS CAN BE MADE BY  
email to: [info@citizensassembly.ie](mailto:info@citizensassembly.ie)  
Online at [www.citizensassembly.ie](http://www.citizensassembly.ie)  
or send by post before the  
Monday 12<sup>th</sup>. December to:

**Citizens' Assembly  
16 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.**



**SUBMISSION TO:  
Justice Mary Laffoy and  
members of the Citizens' Assembly.**



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**Additional information:**

**Name:** Roisin Kelly.....

16 DEC 2016

**Email:**.....  
I do not have an email address and am happy to use donegalprolife123@gmail.com

**Address:**

**Organisation:**

**Topic:** The 8th Amendment of the Constitution

**Title of Submission:** **RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT**

**LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD  
DONEGAL PRO LIFE**

**SUBMISSIONS CAN BE MADE BY**  
email to: [info@citizensassembly.ie](mailto:info@citizensassembly.ie)  
Online at [www.citizensassembly.ie](http://www.citizensassembly.ie)  
or send by post before the  
Monday 12<sup>th</sup>. December to:  
**Citizens' Assembly**  
16 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.



To the Assembly.

Keep THE 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

PROTECT OUR BABIES. Don't kill THEM. LOVE THEM. I OPPOSE ANY change to THE 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment. IF you Agree to MURDERING the BABIES Right-upto Full TERM you ARE NO different to Hitler.

THE Moment OF CONCEPTION is when SPERM penetrates the Egg. It is NOT A BLOB OR CLOT it is New LIFE.

Jara Grace.

16 DEC 2016

**SUBMISSION TO:  
Justice Mary Laffoy and  
members of the Citizens' Assembly.**



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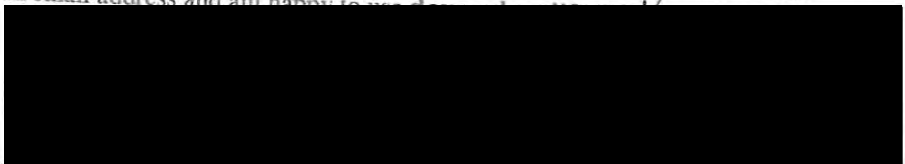
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Additional information:

Name:..... THOMAS CLIBBEN  
Email:..... *thomas.clibben*  
I do not have an email address and am happy to be contacted by post.....

Address:



Organisation:



16 DEC 2016

Topic: The 8th Amendment of the Constitution

Title of Submission: **RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT**

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Citizens' Assembly, 16 Parnell Sq, Dublin 1.

**Submission to Citizens' Assembly  
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The 8th amendment guarantees the equal right to life of both women and their unborn children. The 8th was approved by the people in 1983 and, since that time, has saved an estimated 250,000 lives because our abortion rate has remained much lower than that of countries with +legalised abortion. In Britain for example, one in every five babies is killed by abortion. In Ireland that figure is one in every twenty. If we had Britain's abortion rate we would see 10,000 more abortions every year – or 30 more every day. No reasonable person would welcome more abortions.

The 8th amendment ensures the protection of the most basic human rights. Science tells us that preborn babies are human beings, and therefore deserving of the same protections that all humans enjoy. At 21 days gestation, our hearts are already beating. Every abortion ends a human life.

The 8th amendment protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. In fact, as top medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.

Abortion also hurts women. A 2008 study (Fergusson et al) found that post-abortive women are 30% more likely to experience serious mental health problems while a 2006 study (Gissler et al) found that the suicide rate for post-abortive women was six times higher than women who had given birth.

Abortion not only has negative effects on women, but it is also a cruel and inhumane practice towards the unborn. These children are dismembered and removed piece by piece or given a lethal injection directly into their hearts. This practice is both medieval and barbaric.

Because of our law, babies with disabilities and severe life limiting conditions are guaranteed the same protections as every other child. While abortion activists treat these children as if they were already dead, the fact is that most babies, even the most severe cases, live after birth and their families find their time together enormously healing. Parents of these babies recognize their children's lives as precious and say that improved perinatal hospice care, not abortion, is what they need.

Ireland has a proud history of standing up in defence of human rights and the 8th amendment is a testament to that. I urge you to consider this carefully, and to remember that societies are judged on how they treat their most vulnerable members.

Please protect the 8th amendment.

Thank you!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Ursula O Toole

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

16 DEC 2016

**SUBMISSION TO:**  
**Justice Mary Laffoy**  
**and members of the Citizens' Assembly,**  
**16 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.**

**I wish to make some of my views known,**



1. The 8th Amendment guarantees the equal right to life of **both** mothers and their unborn children.
2. The 8th Amendment protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.
3. Leading medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws.
4. The inquest findings on the sad death of Savita Halappanavar, who died in 2012, found that her death was due to medical misadventure and was not related to the 8th Amendment.
5. Countless lives of unborn children have been saved since 1983 because of the 8th Amendment.
6. Every child **born or unborn** has the right to life including those children with life-limiting conditions and those conceived through rape or incest.

7. **Rape and incest are horrific crimes, but nothing can justify the killing of the innocent unborn baby** in any such case.
8. **Because of the 8th Amendment, the equal right to life of babies with disabilities and those with severe life-limiting conditions is guaranteed, and given the same protection as every other child.**
9. **Abortion kills babies and hurts women.** A study in Finland by Mika Gissler in 1997 found that the **suicide rate among women who had undergone abortions** in the prior year was **three times higher** compared to women in the general population and **six times higher** compared to women who gave birth. A follow-up study by Gissler in 2014 found no statistically significant decrease in the suicide rate.

**I wish to RETAIN the 8th AMENDMENT,**

**Yours sincerely,**

Veronica Malla 16 DEC 2016

**Address:**

**Telephone:**

**Email:**

**SUBMISSION TO:  
Justice Mary Laffoy and  
members of the Citizens' Assembly.**



**The 8th Amendment of the Constitution should be retained for the following reasons:**

- The 8th Amendment guarantees the equal right to life of **both** mothers and their unborn children.
- The 8th Amendment protects the lives of pregnant women and allows our doctors to provide all necessary life-saving care to women experiencing medical emergencies during pregnancy. Our maternal mortality rate remains one of the lowest in the world.
- Leading medical experts testified to the Oireachtas in 2013, no woman has ever died in Ireland because of our pro-life laws.
- Countless lives of unborn children have been saved since 1983 because of the 8th Amendment.
- The inquest findings on the sad death of Savita Halappanavar, who died in 2012, found that her death was due to medical misadventure and was not related to the 8th Amendment.
- Every child **born or unborn** has the right to life including those children with life-limiting conditions and those conceived through rape or incest.
- **Rape and incest are horrific crimes**, but nothing can justify the killing of the **innocent unborn baby** in any such case.
- **Because of the 8th Amendment, the equal right to life of babies with disabilities and those with severe life-limiting conditions is guaranteed, and given the same protection as every other child.**
- **Abortion kills babies and hurts women.** A study in Finland by Mika Gissler in 1997 found that the **suicide rate among women who had undergone abortions** in the prior year was **three times higher** compared to women in the general population and **six times higher** compared to women who gave birth. A follow-up study by Gissler in 2014 found no statistically significant decrease in the suicide rate.

Comments (500 word maximum): I wish to retain the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment for all reasons outlined on this leaflet.

Additional information:

16 DEC 2016

Name: Vincent Mr. Conwell

Email: [Redacted] I do not wish to use donegalprolife123@gmail.com

Address: [Redacted]

Organisation: Irish Citizens

Topic: The 8th Amendment of the Constitution

Title of Submission: RETAIN THE 8th AMENDMENT

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD  
DONEGAL PRO LIFE

SUBMISSIONS CAN BE MADE BY  
email to: [info@citizensassembly.ie](mailto:info@citizensassembly.ie)  
Online at [www.citizensassembly.ie](http://www.citizensassembly.ie)  
or send by post before the  
Monday 12<sup>th</sup>, December to:

Citizens' Assembly  
16 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.

