

I believe this Bill to be draconian and oppressive and discriminatory as it will only target pro-life men and women. I have never and witnessed any of the alleged accusations that have been made by members of the NI Assembly of "Harassment" or "Intimidation". Christian men and women do not act in this manner.

The derogatory claims by MLA Clare Bailey are a targeted attack on pro-life people.

The PSNI are aware of these peaceful prayer vigils and where and when they take place, If any of this alleged activity has taken place, surely the police already have the power to deal with it. But there is NO Police evidence to back up Green Party Leader; Clare Bailey's claims of 'Harassment' and 'Intimidation' near or outside abortion centres in Northern Ireland.

This Bill is an attempt to control and censor the fundamental human rights of freedom of assembly and freedom of expression which are both protected under Articles 10 & 11 of the Human Rights Act. The majority of people who strongly believe that praying outside buildings where babies are being killed are Christian people. Hence why I believe this Bill to be a targeted campaign against human rights and religious freedom.

The proposed 'Abortion Zones' will rob vulnerable women of an alternative to abortion. Women should be allowed to make their own choice if they want help, they should decide. To remove this choice would be wrong.

There is much evidence out there of women who have welcomed the support pro-life vigils have offered them. Whatever the woman chooses she should not be punished because of MLAs.

Additionally, these 'Safe Access Zones' could impose costs on the Department of Health. Two similar zones in England have cost the taxpayer an estimated £150,000 and £250,000. These costs were imposed on the public for the legal costs that were incurred from resisting appeals to convictions. Our health service in Northern Ireland is already under immense strain, but this Bill admits that the majority of costs on the Department of Health will arise from enforcement and legal costs.

Taxpayers money would be better spent on reducing our extensive hospital waiting lists rather than add additional costs to our struggling Health Service by funding 'Exclusion Zones' on Christian men and women. This Bill will "...make it a CRIME to DO ANYTHING..." outside an abortion centre "...which might influence a person in their decision to attend..." an abortion centre.

Simply holding a sign; distributing information leaflets; talking to a woman to offer her help, or even praying outside an abortion centre will be "...punishable on conviction by fines..." up to £2500. If I choose to practice my right to freedom of expression by praying outside any facility where abortions take place, I or others would be subject to being criminalised!

I feel passionate about freedom of assembly and freedom of expression; this Bill aims to target both hence why I oppose Clare Bailey's discriminatory Bill.