

I am making this submission to the Committee in opposition to the Abortion Services (Safe Access Zones) Bill.

Firstly I am regularly in Belfast and am concerned about what happens in the city. Do I want to live in a city where it is possible to deliberately kill some of its citizens? What does it say about its lawmakers? Since when is killing a right?

Secondly, I have heard the testimonies of women who have been greatly helped by people who have supported pregnant women and enabled them to keep their babies. To think that those same babies who I saw could have been murdered is without doubt a crime. I have also listened to the stories of women who have had abortions and the great pain that they suffer throughout their lives. **To be fined or criminalised for helping someone is totally ridiculous.**

The proposal is in defiance of the tradition of liberty within Northern Ireland and Articles 5, 9 & 10 in the European Convention of Human Rights. Authority must not behave in a despotic manner and this is an overreach on individual freedoms. When this happens laws are considered unjust and can be perceived as an act of violence against the person. This can lead to the breakdown of authority and lead to the shameful abuses of citizens which are then highlighted both at home and abroad, bringing shame on all. (CCC 1902 ff) There are numerous examples of this both in recent times and the past. As St Augustine noted "An unjust law is no law at all" It is totally legitimate for citizens to defend their own rights and those of their fellow citizens against the abuse of this authority within the limits of .. the law of the gospel. CCC 2242

There appears to be a creeping totalitarianism in our so called democratic west/homeland. This is to the great detriment of our society. "The single-minded pursuit of abortion means that certain groups think it is justified to outlaw allowing others from offering alternatives to abortion outside of abortion centres" (ie places where babies are deliberately murdered) (C Robinson) This is a type of brain washing. Time will eventually hold responsible and find guilty all those who legally and actively supported the destruction of human life.

Thirdly, Pro-life vigils are peaceful. WHERE IS THE EVIDENCE for Claire Bailey's claims of "harassment" and "intimidation" outside abortion/killing centres? I want to see or hear what she claims.

THE COST? 2 Similar zones in England have cost an estimated £150,000 and £ 250,000. Tax payers' money should be used to treat people on waiting lists rather than being squandered on "abortion zones" (Killing areas)

Freedom of assembly and freedom of expression are fundamental human rights.

The Assembly should reject this unnecessary and disproportionate attempt to introduce censorship zones around abortion clinics and hospitals offering abortion.

A June 2021 poll (<https://comresglobal.com/polls/right-to-life-poll/>) undertaken by SavantaComRes showed that only 25% of the Northern Irish population support the introduction of 'buffer zones' on specific clinics, as this Bill would permit.

Current laws, including the Protection from Harassment (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1997/1180>) and the Public Order (Northern Ireland) Order 1987 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1987/463>) already provide wide-ranging powers for authorities

to keep public order and protect women and the public from genuine harassment and intimidation, including outside abortion clinics.

Censorship zones infringe on free speech, and it is not just pro-life advocates who oppose them.

Big Brother Watch, Index on Censorship, and the Freedom Association  
(<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/modern-orthodoxies-about-the-evils-of-empire-qr3dkkf85>)

I urge you NOT to introduce such measures for the greater good of all.