

Firstly let it be noted that 'Everyone's right to life shall be protected ' (Article 2 of The Human Rights Act), except it seems when that life is not yet born and from Northern Ireland, where abortion has been forced on the people of Northern Ireland without their consent. And now another unjust law in the guise of 'abortion buffer zones' is being proposed which directly conflicts with other articles of The Human Rights Act namely article 10 and 11, whereby 'Everyone has the right to freedom of expression ' and 'Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly.'

I am utterly opposed to the abortion 'safe zones ' bill. Pro- lifers are being deliberately targeted in this Bill. No other section of society would tolerate this. Laws already exist to deal with those who participate in unlawful acts during any public assembly. It is simply a retrograde step if this draconian law is introduced. The British Government is doing a grand job all by itself at chipping away at Human Rights. But it's a sad day when it's aided by the Northern Ireland Assembly and it is especially ironic and hypocritical of the SDLP who advocated over the years for these rights, to now dismiss them. The Call for Evidence regarding these zones has not been well publicised by the Assembly with little time given to public consultation but that seems to be par of the course now.

It has been suggested that the assembly of small groups of people who congregate at abortion clinics are somehow unsafe. On the contrary small assemblies such as these are peaceful vigils where pregnant, vulnerable women are talked to with love and compassion, not harassment. They are given information that would otherwise not be provided once they enter these abortion facilities. They are offered alternatives and practical help whereby the life of the mother as well as her baby is valued. They and their unborn babies are prayed for too. Is praying, distributing leaflets and showing care now to become a crime. Seriously?

Michael Robinson executive director of the British pro-life group Society for the Protection of Unborn Children, in an article written by Kevin J. Jones in the Catholic News Agency dated 9/11/21, stated that 'the intimidation of women outside abortion facilities has been proven time and time again to be a lie, while the abuse that pro-lifers have suffered has not been subject to a review at all. ' There is no harassment by pro-lifers here in Northern Ireland. They are compassionate and passionate about life; all life, and simply feel obliged to show it.