

We wish to state our objection to a statutory opt-out system for organ donation in Northern Ireland.

We find it ironic that an MLA quoted on the local TV news on 20 September of the 'right to life' for those that need new organs, while the same argument put forward by those opposed to abortion was completely ignored by Stormont so much so that abortion is now freely available in Northern Ireland. How sad that you deny life to unborn children while promoting organ donation from deceased people without their prior consent.

The fact that someone has not given their consent should in no way give the State the authority to automatically remove any organs. You will be acting on 'presumed' consent which is completely wrong, and organs should only be removed when a person has given prior consent. Even worse is the idea that families will be pressurised after the death of a loved one to confirm if the deceased person had objected to organ donation. This idea is so insensitive and thoughtless to a grieving family.

Statistics have already proved that public awareness campaigns are a far more effective way of raising consent.

We don't think the public completely understand the opt-out system, in fact most people are unlikely to know that this is going to be law in our country. There seems to have been very little press or TV coverage or indeed discussions therefore denying people who are going to be affected the opportunity to have their say and voice their concerns.

We do understand that organ transplants are vital and lifesaving and while we have already signed organ donation cards, we strongly feel that an 'opt-out system' is the wrong thing to do and urge you not to make it legal in Northern Ireland.

