

It is on my heart to respond to you on this matter of abortion provision. I wish to make it quite clear that I support the Givan Bill, and my reasons are as follows:

I am strongly in favour of preserving life, whether it be babies in the womb all the way through to end of life care. I feel we have a duty to care for life, especially for those who have little or no voice to stand up and make their own case. To end the life of an unborn child is unacceptable to me, and so I will use my voice to stand up for their cause.

I consider that the equality of rights for each individual must be respected, and for me, that applies equally for unborn babies. To draw an arbitrary line in the sand which separates people (born or unborn) into separate camps, and then to apply different rules to each camp is unfair and ought to be banned. More specifically, we ought to protect unborn babies which have either a diagnosed or even suspected non-fatal disability. I have heard of numerous cases where diagnosis was incorrect and the baby was born without any disability. Surely we cannot end the life of an unborn baby based on sometimes flawed processes. We ought to value each precious life, and not discard that life. We must surely end the discrimination towards babies which have non-fatal disabilities.

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 have enshrined in law the protection of these highly vulnerable unborn babies. Let us not undermine the good work that they have achieved towards making it known that each unborn child has inestimable worth and value.

My final point is that the current abortion law produces a stigma for both mothers who are pregnant with a baby diagnosed with a disability, and for those people who are growing up with a disability. This reinforces an extremely negative stereotype, which promotes the idea that they are not valued or wanted, but instead that they should have been terminated prior to birth.

Please consider my points and vote for what is right, that the lives of unborn babies should be protected.