

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing in relation to the bill above. I would like to highlight my own personal experience with abortion and why I believe it is a disservice to men and women, and the unborn infant.

In 1985 my mum found she was expecting her second baby, I was aged 2 at the time. After an amniocentesis detected a chromosomal defect with my sibling, my mother was advised, in very strong terms, to have a termination. She decided this was the best course of action, having been denied any alternate advice or counselling.

She was admitted to the ulster hospital in 1985 and underwent a medical termination. She had labour induced and delivered a perfectly formed 25 week baby boy, born dead. Upon asking the midwife could she see him she was told no it would be too upsetting. She always told me it was likely he was so deformed and it would have been horrific to see. Sadly we know now that the reality is, he was perfectly formed therefore the upset that would have been caused would have been the knowledge that my parents had aborted a perfectly formed human baby.

My father after this point suffered a nervous breakdown, something we are still living with on a daily basis, he has had flare ups for most of my life resulting in hospitalisation most times. My mother developed Alzheimer's 9 years ago and passed away last year, the only blessing of this diagnosis was that she forgot about my brother. My father still lives with the knowledge of him.

When I was clearing out their marital home I found many interesting documents, some relating to her pregnancy with me. Sadly, I found no such record for my brother, it is as if he never existed, and to the world, he didn't. But he did to me, and to my parents, and ultimately he did to God. His little life was precious in the sight of God.

To me, as an only child, I cannot convey in an email the pain it causes me knowing that I have gone through life without my sibling, who was denied the very right to life because one doctor decided it was in our families best interests to terminate the life of a little baby boy made in the image of God.

I will be praying for you on the days ahead as you make a decision. I hope that you make a decision that weighs every life as valuable and precious, regardless of what the world views as 'unfit' or 'imperfect'. History has shown us the types of societies that choose to murder those who do not fit in with the worlds view of 'normal'.

We are not God, we cannot make life and we should not take life. Abortion is the most cruel and barbaric act, taking the life of an innocent unborn human.