

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

7th June 2018

Dear Constituent,

RE: ABORTION LAW IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

Thank you for contacting me recently about abortion in Northern Ireland; your comments upon which I read with great interest.

As I am sure you understand abortion remains a highly sensitive issue for those of all different views and one which must be treated with care and consideration.

I understand that the Irish referendum has undoubtedly reinvigorated debate within Northern Ireland and for many outside the nation, such as yourself. However, it is important to understand that the referendum was specific to Ireland, as a result of a constitutional requirement for a referendum where changes may be made to their constitution. The referendum now allows for legislation amending Ireland's abortion law to be debated and passed through both House of the Oireachtas.

Looking to Northern Ireland, personally, I support the Government's belief that any future reform here must be debated and decided by the people of Northern Ireland and their locally-elected politicians. Importantly, this view is shared in Northern Ireland, where there is cross-party, cross-community consensus that Westminster should not impose its will in this highly sensitive, devolved area.

As has been noted, the Government has acted in this area: since June last year women from Northern Ireland have had access to free abortion procedures performed in England. The Government holds this as striking an appropriate balance between respecting the devolution settlement and supporting women from Northern Ireland in accessing safe abortion services in England.

When the issue of abortion has been debated in the House of Commons it has been as a matter of conscience and has been conducted as a free vote. I support the Secretary of State's view that any future considerations on abortion in the UK are handled with sensitivity and contemplation.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With best wishes,

Tom

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE