



Craig Whittaker MP

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Abortion Law in Northern Ireland

Thank you for contacting me about abortion in Northern Ireland.

Abortion is a highly sensitive issue involving profound issues of belief and conscience and it is vital that it is approached with due regard for the concerns of Northern Ireland's diverse communities.

I understand that the Irish referendum has undoubtedly reinvigorated debate about abortion within Northern Ireland, but it is important to be clear that the referendum was specific to the Republic of Ireland, where a change to their written constitution requires a referendum. The referendum now allows for legislation amending Ireland's abortion law to be debated and passed through both Houses of the Oireachtas.

I support the Government's position that any future reform in Northern Ireland must be debated and decided by the people of Northern Ireland and their locally-elected politicians. This has been the position of successive Governments, both Conservative and Labour.

I very much, therefore, welcome the Northern Ireland Secretary of State's recent commitment to work closely with Northern Ireland's political parties to restore strong, inclusive devolved government at the earliest opportunity.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP