

# Vote to Repeal the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment and bring abortion services home to Ireland

- so that all those in a crisis pregnancy can make their own choice irrespective of money, or problems leaving the State, or how hard it is to get time off
- so that you can get advice and care near where you live before termination of pregnancy, during it, and afterwards
- so that the pregnant person, who is best placed to decide, makes the choice
- so that you will not be alone while deciding, or while having an abortion
- so that doctors deal with you and your consent, and not with the law, when you are ill while pregnant

*At the referendum on the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment-*

*Please vote – your vote is important*

*More details in next column and other side*

What is the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution? – see the other face of this leaflet, column 4

## ***What you can do if you want legal and accessible abortion services here in Ireland –***

*Vote YES in the referendum, which the government have promised for May 2018*

**Do go out and Vote:** if you (or anyone) says there's a million other people who will vote YES, so it will be carried – if many decide that their vote is not needed, the repeal of the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment could be defeated.

If you care that the majority is a YES, you go and cast your own YES!

*Pass this message to your friends – go to the polls and vote Yes. The younger your friends are, the more important that they vote*

**It's best to vote yes, no matter what draft Bill the government offers** – other side, column 6

## ***What if you are not sure about having legal and accessible abortion services in Ireland –***

**Travel abroad** – *Perhaps you approve of terminations abroad – like those who voted YES in the referendum for the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment in 1992 (details on other side of leaflet). This means never stopping anyone having an abortion, though the person has to go to another country.*

**Termination abroad discriminates** – Some people cannot give the *money* for the journey and the clinic; ↴

↴ some people's *commitments* will not allow them to take the few days off for the trip; and, some people have not got *long-term residence* in Ireland and may not be allowed out of Ireland, or will not be let back on return. *So, freedom to terminate a pregnancy abroad discriminates against quite a few people.*

**Your view for yourself** – You might consider it to be wrong and you would never have an abortion yourself – but still you might not want to stop a woman terminating her pregnancy.

**Secrecy** – *Having to travel abroad makes it a secret, with many telling nobody prior to travel, or at all, and the person only first talks about the crisis pregnancy to staff at the abortion clinic.*

**Change of mind** – A particular person might not be totally in favour of aborting this pregnancy, but in Ireland now they often arrange and travel to an abortion clinic in Britain.

*Often it is after travelling that they first talk about it – but by travelling you have biased yourself to continue with the abortion. If the service were in Ireland, not too far from home, some would go home to think about it, and this would enable some to **not** have a termination.*

**To let other people who are pregnant make their own choice, fairly and with no pressure, vote YES to repeal the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment.**

## Termination by pills in Ireland

When pregnant, you can get tablets by the Internet, that safely terminate pregnancy, up to 9 weeks. People who do this are afraid to seek a doctor's help – it's not legal in Ireland.

For people aborting with pills to be able to see a doctor, it's best to repeal the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment.

## Constitution of Ireland 1937, Article 40.3.3

### 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment, 1983

The State acknowledges the right to life of the unborn and, with due regard to the equal right to life of the mother, guarantees in its laws to respect, and, as far as practicable, by its laws to defend and vindicate that right.

#### Added 1992 (13<sup>th</sup> Amendment)

This subsection shall not limit freedom to travel between the State and another state.

#### Added 1992 (14<sup>th</sup> Amendment)

This subsection shall not limit freedom to obtain or make available, in the State, subject to such conditions as may be laid down by law, information relating to services lawfully available in another state.

### History of the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the Constitution

A minority of people pushed the 2 largest parties, at 3 general elections in 1981 and 1982, to insert this, by a referendum, in 1983. Of voters who turned out, 2/3 voted for the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment.

*The X case, 1992* – X was aged 14. A man raped her, she became pregnant, and she planned suicide if it continued. Her parents asked Gardaí how the abortion clinic in Britain would send a sample from the fetus for the rape case. This led the attorney-general to ask the High Court to stop her travelling out of Ireland, and the judge made an injunction for 9 months.

*The Supreme Court* soon after allowed X to travel, because 4 of the 5 judges said this: *if it is* ↗

↗ *probable that there is a real and substantial risk the mother will die, termination of pregnancy is legal in Ireland.* But 3 of the 5 judges agreed that the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment could stop you going abroad if there is no risk of death.

*The 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> amendments* – Injunctions against travel shocked the government. In referendums in late 1992, the people added 2 extra sentences to Article 40.3.3 (2/3 of votes cast approved). By approving the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment, 2/3 of the people agreed that they want someone who is pregnant to be allowed choose to terminate it, though in another country.

There was a 12<sup>th</sup> amendment referendum on the same day, to remove suicide as a ground for termination. Voters rejected this.

### The 13<sup>th</sup> amendment means a woman's right to choose (abroad)

In 1992, 2/3 of people at a referendum said they want someone who is pregnant to make their own choice on termination of pregnancy in another country, by that country's rules.

It is likely that now at least 4/5 of people want to let you make that choice. The only part of this that is not satisfactory is that this choice can only be had abroad –you cannot get it in Ireland.

**Vote to have a Woman's Right to Choose in Ireland**

**Vote to repeal the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment of the constitution**

### **Legislation, if the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment goes**

The government has said it will publish a draft Bill by 06 March 2018 – with no limit on abortion up to 12 weeks, as the Citizens' Assembly and the Oireachtas Committee said. But note – *after repeal, nothing can force the Dáil and Senate to pass this bill.*

### **No Trust in Politicians?**

Unfortunately there is no mechanism for you to be sure that the law later passed on termination will be as liberal, or as limited, as you'd like.

***Best to vote for repeal, whether the published bill is either too liberal for you, or too restrictive.***

We let the Dáil and Senate legislate on other things, and can change our vote at elections. We can do the same on abortion law.

Whichever type of law on abortion you favour, the Dáil and Senate *cannot pass any such law* until after the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment has been repealed.

### Mid-West Humanists

The Mid-West Humanists are people (in Limerick, Clare, and Tipperary) with no religion, or leaning that way, who meet in Limerick. They meet similar people, with no rule about what a person thinks or believes in order to attend.

*Inquiries to* [info@midwesthumanists.com](mailto:info@midwesthumanists.com)

*Meeting details and details about humanism at* [www.midwesthumanists.com](http://www.midwesthumanists.com)

Humanists favour good and moral lives; and morals and knowledge come from us humans.