

8

Reasons
to save
the 8th





1. THE 8TH LOVES THEM BOTH

The 8th protects the right to life of **both mother AND baby**¹. It doesn't favour the baby over the mother — instead it asks us to love and protect them both. That's what it means to be a progressive and compassionate society.

2. IT KEEPS WOMEN SAFE

Women are very safe in pregnancy in Ireland under the 8th amendment according to the most recent medical inquiry (2017)² — and **doctors say they have never been prevented from giving a woman any life-saving treatment she needed when it was required**.³ Repealing the 8th won't make women safer — it will just legalise abortion.

3. IT PROTECTS BABIES

The 8th protects preborn babies who are **undeniably human** and recognises the human right to life of these babies. Medical technology means



All humans
deserve to live
free from violence

The child in this image is between 7 to 8 weeks old. Her heart has been beating for a couple of weeks, and her kidneys, arms, legs and brain are developing rapidly. All children, no matter how tiny and helpless, deserve to be protected. (Photo from Lunar Caustic)

we can no longer deny the humanity of a baby whose heart begins to beat at 21 days and who is perfectly formed at 8 weeks.

4. IT PROTECTS PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES FROM DISCRIMINATION

Preborn babies with a disability are legally protected under the 8th amendment. In contrast, 90% of unborn

babies diagnosed with Down Syndrome are aborted in Britain.⁴ This also means the 8th has helped us to develop **better treatments for babies born with disabilities**. For example, a leading heart specialist recently observed that, because we don't abort babies with congenital heart disease "it allows us to build up a particular expertise here in dealing with those sick newborns."⁵

5. IT HAS KEPT OUR ABORTION RATE LOW

The 8th has led Ireland to support women, by offering real, life-affirming choices instead of pushing abortion. The number of Irish women travelling for **abortion has fallen by 50%** since 2002.⁶ If we repeal the 8th we would get the British model of abortion – that means one in five babies being aborted before birth. It would lead to **10,000 MORE abortions** every year. No reasonable person wants more abortions to happen.



**#ABORTION
DISCRIMINATES**



Compassion
for every
Life...

This image is of Myah Walker and her daughter Faith, who was diagnosed with anencephaly (a condition which prevents the normal development of the skull and brain) at Myah's 19 week scan. Although doctors said Faith would not live long after birth, Myah chose life, and Faith lived to be over three months old. Her short life was full of love.

6. IT SAVES WOMEN FROM AN EXPLOITATIVE INDUSTRY

The 8th protects women from the exploitative abortion industry and from the harmful effects of abortion. **Abortion hurts women.** A 2008 study conducted by Dr. David Fergusson and published in the British Journal of Psychiatry found that women who had abortions had rates of mental disorder that were about 30% higher.⁷ In 2017, Marie Stopes, a massive British abortion chain, were caught paying staff bonuses if they encouraged women to have abortions, according to the British Care Quality Commission.⁸

#PROTECTTHE8TH

7. IT ENCOURAGES COMPASSIONATE CARE

The 8th has encouraged Ireland to seek **better care when a crisis arises in pregnancy** – for example, developing perinatal hospice care to help parents and babies where a life-limiting diagnosis has been made. Abortion campaigners cruelly describe these babies as a ‘fatal abnormality’ and ignore the distress abortion brings for women in these situations, usually involving a late-term abortion. A recent study showed that women who had an abortion after a diagnosis of a severe disability were much more likely to suffer depression and despair. These families need time with their babies, not abortion.⁹

8. IT PROVIDES A BETTER ANSWER THAN ABORTION

The 8th has encouraged us as a society to **listen to women** and to understand that women need a better answer than abortion.

Laura Ní Chonghaile became pregnant after rape and says that the 8th protected her and her daughter.

“She helped me heal, she brought light after the darkness,” she says. “Almost 8 out of 10 women in Ireland do not seek abortion after rape. We should punish rapists, not babies. Help women instead of rushing to assume abortion is the answer.”



A HUMAN RIGHT TO LIFE

The government want us to vote to take the right to life away from preborn babies – and give them the power to bring in any abortion law they want and to make any changes they want to that law in future. Powerful politicians want to bring in abortion on vague ‘health’ grounds up to birth, and for any reason at all up to 12 weeks. This is abortion on demand – abortion because the baby is a girl, or a twin, or even because she or he is just inconvenient. Say no to the government’s extreme abortion proposal.

SAVE THE 8TH

¹ The 8th states: “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.”

² Maternal Death Enquiry Ireland 2017

³ Joint Oireachtas Committee on Health and Children, Jan 8, 2013.

⁴ (National Down Syndrome Cytogenetic Register (NDSCR) for England and Wales for 2013)

⁵ Dr Paul Ozliskok, Consultant Paediatric Cardiologist, Morning Ireland, RTÉ, Nov 17th 2017

⁶ HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme (SHCPP), 13th May 2017

⁷ David M. Fergusson, L. John Horwood and Joseph M. Boden, “Abortion and mental health disorders: evidence from a 30-year longitudinal study,” *The British Journal of Psychiatry* (2008), 2008, pp. 444-451

⁸ Care Quality Commission (UK) Inspections Reports (2016,2017)

⁹ Cope H, Garrett ME, Gregory S, Ashley-Koch A. Pregnancy continuation and organizational religious activity following prenatal diagnosis of a lethal fetal defect are associated with improved psychological outcome. *Prenatal diagnosis*. 2015;35(8):761-768. doi:10.1002/pd.4603

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SAVE THE 8TH

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PROTECT THE 8TH

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LIFE CANVASS is a voluntary, nationwide initiative. It is supported by the Save the 8th and Protect the 8th campaigns. We aim to have one-to-one conversations, to answer questions, provide information and explain why there is always a better answer than abortion.