

## **50 years of Choice for Women**

### **Abortion Act, 27<sup>th</sup> October 1967**

The Regional Women's Committee have for many years supported Abortion Rights UK, in line with National UNISON women's policy. Recently Abortion Rights UK asked labour movement organisations to offer support and donate £50 to mark fifty years since abortion was legalised. The South East Regional Women's Committee would be grateful if branches could consider making a donation.

The 1967 Abortion Act dragged abortion out of the dangerous backstreets and was life-saving for many, many women. Despite this in the 50 years since then there have been many attempts to challenge it and movements that continually do so. The situation is very different however in Ireland where it is still illegal. And this year, Northern Ireland has started criminally charging people for taking safe abortion pills!

For more information visit Abortion Rights UK: <http://www.abortionrights.org.uk/who-we-are/> and the Abortion Support Network (ASN) websites <http://www.asn.org.uk/>. ASN provides financial assistance, accommodation, and confidential, non-judgemental information to women forced to travel from Ireland and pay privately for abortions in England. The cost ranges between £400 and £2000 depending on circumstance and stage of pregnancy.

Please support a woman's right to safe, legal abortion – regardless of where they live or their ability to pay.

Write to your MP now! (see over for suggested letter)

**UNISON continues to fight for Women's Justice and Equality**

## **Possible letter to MPs:**

Dear (insert name of MP),

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2017 marks 50 years since the passing of the 1967 Abortion Act. Before the Act, around 100,000 illegal abortions were carried out each year in Britain. Botched back-street abortions resulted in an estimated 35,000 women being hospitalised each year and in 15% of all maternal deaths. Poorer women were at greatest risk of unsafe abortions.

The Act does not extend to Northern Ireland and it is estimated that some 1,000 women travel to England, Wales and Scotland ever year for abortions. Women from Northern Ireland no longer have to pay up to £1,400 for the procedure but this still remains an option only for those with the means to fund their own travel and accommodation.

As my MP, I would like to ask you to please support a woman's right to safe, legal abortion – regardless of where they live or their ability to pay,

Regards,

(insert signature)

(insert name)

(insert home address)