

First Hand Experiences/ Personal Stories received during the Citizens' Assembly Submissions Process on the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution

The Members have indicated that the Assembly should hear directly from women who have been affected by the Eighth Amendment.

To that end the Secretariat has identified, to the greatest extent possible, all of the personal stories received through the submissions process, and a list of these is provided as an appendix to this document to allow the Members and the wider public ease of access.

We have taken a very broad interpretation of what is meant by personal story. The majority of stories are personal testimony from women who have been affected by the Eighth Amendment. We have also included stories received from partners, parents and grandparents of those affected, friends and others who have been affected by the Eighth Amendment. It also includes some personal testimony from members of the medical profession who wished to share their experience with the Assembly.

In many cases those making the submission requested anonymity and those wishes have been respected. In a small number of cases the Secretariat has taken the decision to anonymize certain details- this is mostly where the story being told relates to a third party and it is unclear to the Secretariat if that third party has consented to their story being shared.

Many of the submissions received from Advocacy Groups also contained extensive personal testimony from women. In many cases those women chose that path to share their story as they had an existing relationship with that group and felt more comfortable sharing their stories there. These submissions contain a wealth of experience and all relevant organisations are listed in this document to help the members of the Assembly and the wider public access them.

These personal stories can now found on the website in the following ways:

- By searching 'NWS', these are the personal stories received where anonymity has been requested and the **Name is With the Secretariat**
- By searching the person's name. A full list of those who made submissions of this nature is provided below.
- By searching by the name of the Advocacy Group

The Secretariat has tried to be as comprehensive as possible in compiling this list. However, if you feel your published submission should be included on this list or if you have any other queries please contact the Secretariat at info@citizensassembly.ie Please note that the Assembly members will be made aware of any additions arising from these changes.

Appendix

List of those who have made a submission of a personal story to the Citizens Assembly

Name	Submission Title	Date
NWS	I am a bereaved mum of two babies diagnosed with fatal fetal abnormalities. One of my babies was diagnosed with anencephaly and another with Edwards Syndrome.	12/10/2016
Fionnula MacLiam	Personal experience, privately & professionally.	16/10/2016
Caitriona Weafer	End the Power of Ethos that Denies Us Our Rights	17/10/2016
Maura Callaghan	My experience of the 8th amendment	19/10/2016
Felicity Howe-Prior	Maternal healthcare affected by 8th ammendment.	20/10/2016
Jacalyn Blake	Please repeal the 8th amendment	30/10/2016
Martin Gordon	My objection to the removal of the 8th. Amendment of the Constitution.	31/10/2016
Eilis OHara	Fatal foetal abnormality	02/11/2016
Orla FitzGerald	"I Exist"	06/11/2016
Diane McGovern	Please Uphold The Sanctity Of Life in Catholic Ireland	15/11/2016
James Maidment	Please repeal the 8th amendment of the Constitution.	17/11/2016
NWS	Fatal foetal abnormality - Our Story	18/11/2016
NWS	Denied my human right of choice.	20/11/2016
Bernadette Goulding	Abortion is the ultimate betrayal of women	23/11/2016
Mary Fitzgerald	The pain and heartbreak of abortion	24/11/2016
Ger O'Gara	Please think long and hard.	24/11/2016
Kate Mooney	Whatever your views on abortion, the 8th is dangerous, degrading and wrong.	24/11/2016
Clare Sutton	Please let me live	25/11/2016
NWS	Personal abortion story - please keep anonymity	25/11/2016
Ellen Byrne	Repeal the Eighth	25/11/2016
Marie Burns	Please do not Repeal the Eighth Amendment.	25/11/2016
Sarah Moylan	Please allow for terminations in cases of fatal fetal abnormalities	25/11/2016
Vanessa O'Sullivan	My Experience	25/11/2016
John Moylan	Please allow for terminations in cases of fatal fetal abnormalities	25/11/2016

Sean Collins	Adoption as opposed to abortion.	25/11/2016
Virag Hogan	Please keep the Eight!	25/11/2016
NWS	My personal views	25/11/2016
Anne-Marie Greenan	protect the 8th amendment	25/11/2016
Siobhan O' Donoghue	Untitled Submission	26/11/2016
Claire Duggan	My experience	26/11/2016
Lucy Phelan	Why we need to repeal the 8th amendment	26/11/2016
Tara Flynn	Request to address the citizens Assembly	27/11/2016
Aisling Prior	I would like abortion to be available to women in Ireland.	28/11/2016
NWS	Personal account	28/11/2016
Anna Veronica Morrison	Choice has its place at the pre-conception stage not once conception has occurred!	28/11/2016
Bernadette Goulding	Abortion does not help women	29/11/2016
Carmel Ui Churraoin	"I have carved you in the palm of my hand" Isaiah 49:16	29/11/2016
Ciara Maye	Supportive culture	29/11/2016
Paula Gibson	Untitled Submission	30/11/2016
Katie Lowry	My story	03/12/2016
Nuala Clarke	My baby girl was suffering	03/12/2016
NWS	I remember sitting on the flight thinking it this plane crashes everyone will know I am pregnant	04/12/2016
Deirdre McGrath	Every Life Matters	04/12/2016
Elaine Cassidy	Postal Submission	05/12/2016
Amanda Gallagher	Protect the 8th Amendment	06/12/2016
Jane McKeever	Personal experience of the effects of the 8th Amendment	06/12/2016
Triona O'Flynn	The Eight Amendment Saves lives. My Daughter and I are proof of that!	06/12/2016
NWS	My submission to the Citizens Assembly	07/12/2016
Marie Ni She	My experience of accessing a termination	07/12/2016
Bernadette O'Connor	Protect the Eighth Amendment	08/12/2016
Madeleine Gray	For the Sake of My Daughter	09/12/2016
Helen Black	My Abortion Story	09/12/2016
NWS	A personal story	09/12/2016
NWS	Personal Account of traveling to the UK for an abortion.	09/12/2016
Deborah Behan	Proper support and counselling for women with crisis pregnancies	09/12/2016
NWS	Repeal	09/12/2016
Josephine Delaney	Abortion and repeal of the 8th - A personal Testimony	10/12/2016
Laure Legrand	The reason I believe in choice.	10/12/2016

NWS	My Abortion	10/12/2016
Rachel Brady	Repeal the Eight Amendment of the Irish Constitution	10/12/2016
Olivia Byrne	Repeal the 8th. self dermination. Full body autonomy.	10/12/2016
NWS	Make emigrant Irish proud of our country	11/12/2016
Fionna Fox	My experience of abortion	11/12/2016
NWS	Revised personal submission re Abortion for reasons of disability	11/12/2016
Brian Lanigan	How the Eighth Amendment Affected My Life	11/12/2016
NWS	There has to be a choice	11/12/2016
Olive Carey	It should be a woman's choice	12/12/2016
NWS	A mother's decision	12/12/2016
NWS		12/12/2016
Dr Thomas O Brien	Personal reason for pro-life views	12/12/2016
Anne Hazard	The 8th Amendment Saves Lives	12/12/2016
NWS	Postal Submission	12/12/2016
Sonia Cashin	Postal Submission	12/12/2016
NWS	My Sisters Agony	12/12/2016
Anne Murtagh	Protection of the helpless unborn child	13/12/2016
Dr Kate Antosik-Parsons	Personal Experience of Travelling to obtain an abortion	13/12/2016
Clair Jones	My experience of having a baby with a life limiting condition	13/12/2016
Pat Ward	I'm against abortion - i.e. murdering an unborn human being	13/12/2016
Martina Wynne	Do not change the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution . Life begins at conception and ends with natural death.	13/12/2016
Ann Parkes	Being pregnant in Ireland	13/12/2016
NWS	I had an Abortion	13/12/2016
Liz Brosnan	Trust women	13/12/2016
Tom Dunphy	Untitled Submission	13/12/2016
Thomas Quinn	The 8th Amendment should be repealed and the people of Ireland should be ask to vote on such	13/12/2016
Aine O Neill	Our story.	13/12/2016
Fergus Collins	Children diagnosed with special needs.	13/12/2016
Julie Kelleher	Repeal the 8th	13/12/2016
Natasha Peters	Mother's with children who have complicated care needs	13/12/2016
Lynn Morrison-Kee	Letter re the 8th Amendment - please see uploaded file	13/12/2016
Elaine Harvey	Time for a referendum	13/12/2016

Aisling O'Riordan	Please Consider Every Woman of Ireland and her Freedom	13/12/2016
NWS	My plea for the assembly to recommend a referendum to repeal the eighth amendment as soon as possible.	13/12/2016
NWS	Why I believe we must repeal	13/12/2016
Vera McCafferty	Two wrongs never made a right.	13/12/2016
Geraldine Buckley	Postal Submission	13/12/2016
Susan (Full Name with Secretariat)	Repeal the Eighth	13/12/2016
NWS	Regret lasts for ever	13/12/2016
Louise Garrity	Abortion Hurts Women	13/12/2016
Lynn Coles	Stark 'choices' - Baby versus Employer	13/12/2016
NWS	A summary of a personal story; please change my personal details publicly to protect the privacy of my family.	14/12/2016
Matthew Melis	Our Abortion Story	14/12/2016
NWS	Thank you for reading	14/12/2016
NWS	Making people travel for surgical procedures	14/12/2016
Maura O'Riordan	My Baby	14/12/2016
Aoife Tunney	Only a woman's choice	14/12/2016
NWS	You left me on my own	14/12/2016
Isabelle Walsh	My submission on the 8th amendment	14/12/2016
Mandy O'Neill	Why the 8th amendment needs to be saved!!	14/12/2016
Aoife Dolan	Change is needed	14/12/2016
NWS	A personal story from living in the UK	14/12/2016
NWS	My story, how the 8th amendment compounded our grief and trauma	14/12/2016
Geraldine Buckley	Untitled Submission	14/12/2016
Siobhan Donohue	How the Eighth Amendment Affected Me	14/12/2016
NWS	The Eighth Amendment and Me	14/12/2016
NWS	Why the 8th Amendment should be retained	14/12/2016
Pamela Conroy	Planned parenthood	14/12/2016
NWS	Untitled Submission	15/12/2016
NWS	I am writing to tell you my story as an Irish woman living in Ireland who needed an abortion.	15/12/2016
NWS	Keep the Eighth Amendment and defend the right to life	15/12/2016
NWS	Our Story of heartache	15/12/2016
Nicholas Flood	Protect the unborn Irish Citizen	15/12/2016
Lewis Atkinson	Our Summer came and went	15/12/2016
Nadia Williams	Right to life should include right to be wanted	15/12/2016
Linnea Dunne	Repeal the 8th Amendment - from a mother of two who lost a baby	15/12/2016

June Twomey	Keep the Eighth Amendment	15/12/2016
NWS	It's barbaric to force pregnancy	15/12/2016
Frances Cashman	Judge and Jury	15/12/2016
Anne Marie Delaney	Sanctity of Life	15/12/2016
NWS	The grandchild who never would have been	15/12/2016
Anna Mackey	Why I oppose abortion, as a feminist woman	15/12/2016
Sean Feeney	Please Save the 8th Amendment	15/12/2016
NWS	The effects of the 8th Amendment on me	15/12/2016
NWS	Let us heal	15/12/2016
NWS	My abortion experience	15/12/2016
NWS	The Alienation of an Irish Abortion	15/12/2016
NWS	Personal story	15/12/2016
	Please retain the eighth ammendment	15/12/2016
	My own experience of pregnancy and loss	15/12/2016
Michelle Sheehan	Ella	15/12/2016
NWS	I'm one of the 12 a day	15/12/2016
Michael Power	Beating the odds	15/12/2016
Dorothy Madden	Mother of a baby with fatal fetal abnormality.	15/12/2016
Cliona Ni Laoi	Freedom of choice is a basic human right. Abortion is a necessity.	15/12/2016
Solène Vermont	8th amendment and patient disempowerment	15/12/2016
NWS	Personal Narrative	15/12/2016
NWS	Postal Submission	15/12/2016
Claire Roche	I Count Myself Lucky.	16/12/2016
NWS	Feeling Respected in my Choice	16/12/2016
Clodagh van As	Untitled Submission	16/12/2016
Stephanie Byrne	My Brother's Story	16/12/2016
NWS	LIFE! A PRECIOUS GIFT	16/12/2016
Maria Byrne	The Eight Amendment is Progressive and Saves Lives	16/12/2016
Catherine Grant	My crisis pregnancy	16/12/2016
NWS	Why we need to repeal the eighth amendment.	16/12/2016
Paula Moran	Please KEEP the 8th Amendment	16/12/2016
Sarah Ann Behan	Repeal the Eighth Amendment.	16/12/2016
NWS	Please protect the 8th amendment	16/12/2016
Anne Lynch	All life is a gift.	16/12/2016
Melissa McDermott	Untitled Submission	16/12/2016
Suzanne Keaveney	Untitled Submission	16/12/2016
Jenny Wong	We need the right to abortion now.	16/12/2016
Jennifer McDonald	Allow abortion in cases of TFMR	16/12/2016
Michelle Darmody	Repeal the 8th	16/12/2016
NWS	Our Story- Fatal Fetal Abnormality	16/12/2016

NWS	The story of our son Noah (Please do not publish any identifying information, such as name or contact details)	16/12/2016
Derbhile Buckley	Personal Experience of Maternity Care in England and Ireland	16/12/2016
Rhonda Donaghey	Personal Submission	16/12/2016
NWS	Repeal the 8th and legislate for abortion healthcare	16/12/2016
NWS		16/12/2016
Therese Deane	Left abandoned	16/12/2016
NWS		16/12/2016
Moya Power	Repeal the 8th	16/12/2016
Sarah Hynes	Abortion is not the answer for babies diagnosed with a life limiting condition	16/12/2016
Mary Lee	Keep the eighth amendment	16/12/2016
NWS	The Pain of Abortion	16/12/2016
Tracey Smith	My story of having a baby with a Fatal Fetal Abnormality. Silence.	16/12/2016
NWS	My Spanish Experience - Abortion as a legal right and a healthcare option	16/12/2016
NWS	My Personal Experience with Abortion	16/12/2016
NWS	Dear Members of the Citizen's Assembly	16/12/2016
NWS	Repeal the Eighth	16/12/2016
Gabriella Ditsan	OUTRAGED, ALONE, HURT	16/12/2016
NWS	My own story	16/12/2016
NWS	An example of professional, women-centered abortion services within the primary healthcare system	16/12/2016
NWS	Síofra	16/12/2016
NWS	We Need Choice	16/12/2016
Sophie Loy	pro choice	16/12/2016
NWS	8th amendment submission	16/12/2016
Aoife Nold	Repeal for me	16/12/2016
NWS	My story	16/12/2016
Lucy Watmough	Untitled Submission	16/12/2016
Niamh O'Shea	Choose Life	16/12/2016
Amy La Grue	Submission to the Citizens' Assembly	16/12/2016
NWS	Protect our Mothers and babies	16/12/2016
NWS	My personal story	16/12/2016
NWS	Dylan - we will always wonder who you would have been. PLEASE REDACT MY PERSONAL DETAILS WHEN PUBLISHING	16/12/2016
Caoimhe Kerins	32 Year old Mother's Submission	16/12/2016
JP Johnson	From the father of a child with anencephaly	16/12/2016

Ruth Bowie	My experience of abortion for a fatal foetal abnormality	16/12/2016
NWS	Travelling with a Friend	16/12/2016
NWS	Daughter Alive because of 8th Amendment	16/12/2016
NWS	Why I turned from abortion and thank God I did	16/12/2016
NWS	My plea to Citizens Assembly - Note please don't publish personal story	16/12/2016
NWS	Pro-choice submission from a woman who had an abortion	16/12/2016
NWS	Letter to members of the assembly on a personal experience of abortion outside of Ireland.	16/12/2016
Anna McCaul	Personal Submission on the 8th Amendment	16/12/2016
NWS	Abortion is happening even though it is banned	16/12/2016
Justyne Whooley	The right to life	16/12/2016
NWS	Abortion and Mental Health	16/12/2016
Dr. Charlotte Christ	Opinion of a young Medic	16/12/2016
Patricia Mary Danaher	Life	16/12/2016
Peter McKenna	Personal story	16/12/2016
Carly Bailey	A right to choose.	16/12/2016
Dr Úna Ní Ghógáin	Personal Experience of Fatal Foetal Abnormality	16/12/2016
Sinead Lennon	A Life Unlived:Mine	16/12/2016
NWS	My experience	16/12/2016
Jill O'Leary	Personal Submission to the Citizens Assembly	16/12/2016
NWS	Reproductive rights in Ireland must align with other EU member states	16/12/2016
Tom Morrissey	The journey	16/12/2016
NWS	Personal submission	16/12/2016
NWS	Repeal the 8th Amendment	16/12/2016
NWS	Repeal for my daughter	16/12/2016
Jessica Lord	Trust us to trust you	16/12/2016
Eilis De Buitlear Kearney	Submission to the Citizens' Assembly on the 8th Amendment to the Constitution of Ireland	16/12/2016
NWS	A Relais of my memories growing up in Ireland under the spectre of the Eight Amendment to Bunreacht na hEireann : three intimate stories involving three role models of mine: all affected by the said amendment.	16/12/2016
Geraldine Swanepoel	Ireland's Focus on Life Helped Save My Child	16/12/2016
NWS		16/12/2016
Siobhan Whelan	Inequality of the 8th Amendment : failing to protect all unborn children to their right to life	16/12/2016
NWS		16/12/2016
Siobhan Gallagher	Women's right violations. Repeal the eighth.	16/12/2016

Sara Benson	My 8th amendment experience	16/12/2016
Carolyn Ui Mheadhra	Post abortion trauma and suffering	16/12/2016
Elle Maher	The Ultimate Equality	16/12/2016
NWS	Personal Experience of Abortion - Please redact name from publication online	16/12/2016
kathleen Maguire Jordan	A Never Ending Story	16/12/2016
Mairead McGrath	Pressure to get an abortion, instead of encouragement to have a baby	16/12/2016
Brendan Conroy	A Father's View	16/12/2016
Niamh Crudden	A personal story of dealing with a diagnosis of fatal feotal anomaly	16/12/2016
NWS		16/12/2016
NWS	Sam I Am	16/12/2016
Helena Byrne	Untitled Submission	16/12/2016
NWS	My experience of travelling for an abortion	16/12/2016
NWS	My experience shows it only takes one abortion to cause a whole family to suffer (and to need help from the community). On a large scale, this is detrimental to any country, but the Eighth Amendment can continue to prevent such suffering in Ireland.	16/12/2016
NWS	Adoption : as this is a personal experience please remove my name or replace it with a fake name, as adoption is my sons story to tell.	16/12/2016
NWS	Give women choice. I do not want my personal details published.	16/12/2016
NWS	Personal heartache	16/12/2016
NWS	Untitled Submission	16/12/2016
NWS	Eighth Amendment should be removed from the Constitution	16/12/2016
NWS	Silence	16/12/2016

List of Advocacy Groups with personal testimony

Abortion Rights Campaign
Abortion Support Network, UK
AKIdWa (Akina Dada wa Africa)
Amenda Mellet and Centre for Reproductive Rights, Switzerland
Amnesty International
Carlow Healing Rooms
Every Life Counts
Ireland Stand Up
One Day More
One Family
Parents for Choice
Pro Life Campaign
Repeal the 8th Sligo Abortion Rights Campaign
TMFR Ireland (Termination for Medical Reasons)
University of Texas at Austin
Women Hurt