

// October 2017

Senator Catherine Noone,  
Chair of the Joint Committee on the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

Dear Senator Noone,

I refer to an exchange that occurred during the Committee hearing last Wednesday, 4 October, about the specific recommendation made by the Assembly in Reason 13 on Ballot 4B on the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution.

I am aware you read the exact percentages of that vote into the record subsequently for clarity. However I am aware that some recent media reports may have engendered some confusion on this issue also. As such, I think it would be of assistance if I reiterated the recommendation of the Assembly in regard to Reason 13.

The precise wording of Reason 13 was 'no restriction as to reasons'. The recommendation of the Assembly (by a majority of 64%) was that termination of pregnancy with no restriction as to reasons should be lawful here, but this was further qualified by the Members views on gestational limitations or none. In relation to gestational limits, those Members had further expressed their view on the Ballot as to whether termination of pregnancy should be permitted up to 12 weeks gestation only, up to 22 weeks gestation only, or with no restriction as to gestational age. The option which achieved the highest number of votes here was *up to 12 weeks gestation only* with 48% voting for this option. Accordingly the recommendation of the Assembly for Reason 13 is that termination of pregnancy should be permitted with no restriction as to reasons, but up to 12 weeks gestation only.

According to the resolution approving establishment of the Assembly: "all matters before the Assembly will be determined by a majority of votes of members present and voting, other than the Chairperson who will have a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes".

Full details on the voting arrangements and procedure are provided on pages e825 to e828 of the Report, and the Members of the Committee may wish to familiarise



themselves with this note, which was provided to the Members of the Assembly in advance of the meeting in April.

I hope this provides full clarification on the matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mary Laffoy", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

The Hon. Mary Laffoy  
Chairperson  
The Citizens' Assembly