

# Irish pro-lifers vow to fight on after poll supports repeal of abortion ban



Irish pro-life campaigners campaigning for the protection of the eighth amendment. (PHOTO: LoveBoth Project Facebook page)

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Pro-life groups in Ireland say they'll regroup and keep fighting to defend unborn children as the battle shifts to rearguard action after Friday's majority vote for legal abortion.

Nearly 66% of a 64% turnout of Irish citizens voted to repeal the country's Eighth Amendment, which recognises the unborn child's right to life, in a result pro-life leaders described as tragic and heartbreaking.

Health Minister Simon Harris said after Saturday's vote count he would ask for cabinet approval as early as Tuesday to turn the government's draft law into a proposed legislative text, [the Guardian](#) reported.

Harris said he's hoping to bring in legislation on abortion in "early autumn" and Irish Prime Minister, or Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar, said the law will change within six months to allow abortion.

### **Holding the Prime Minister to his promise**

"We will hold the Taoiseach to his promise that repeal would only lead to abortion in very restrictive circumstances," countered Dr Ruth Cullen, spokesperson of the LoveBoth campaign, on Saturday.

"He gave his word on this, now he must deliver on it. No doubt many people voted for repeal based on the Taoiseach's promises in this regard," said Cullen, as quoted in [the Irish Catholic](#).

Pro-life activist Cora Sherlock, deputy chair of the Pro-life Campaign, reiterated in a tweet the day before the referendum that the government was proposing unrestricted abortion.

"Tomorrow's vote is about abortion on demand. It's not restrictive, it's not limited. A vote for repeal would introduce abortion laws more extreme than the law in Britain where 1 in 5 babies are lost to abortion," she noted.

She tweeted Saturday the fight wasn't over.

*Today is a sad day for Ireland and for people who believe in genuine human rights. The struggle to defend the most vulnerable has not ended today, it's just changed. Thank you to all the incredible people who worked so hard to protect women and save babies. We fight on. [#8thref](#)*

– Cora Sherlock (@CoraSherlock) [May 26, 2018](#)

"We now have to hold the government to what they have said, that they want to see a situation where abortion will be rare," Sherlock told [Reuters](#).

She told [the Irish Independent](#) that she was “very, very upset” by the vote.

“I will accept the will of the Irish people, at the same time I will make it very clear what I feel of the campaign that has taken place,” she said. “We will now regroup and find out what our next move is.”

### **What the draft law allows**

The government’s draft law will allow abortion on demand in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, after a three-day waiting period, according to the Guardian.

The proposed law permits abortion after the 12th week on the grounds of alleged risk to the mother’s life or “serious risk” to her health, or for alleged fatal foetal abnormality, and with approval by two doctors.

It will restrict abortion after 24 weeks of pregnancy but allow it at any stage for alleged fatal foetal abnormality.

“We will oppose that legislation,” John McGuirk of Save the 8th campaign noted in a statement Saturday. “If and when abortion clinics are opened in Ireland, because of the inability of the government to keep their promise about a GP-led service, we will oppose that as well.”

Irish-American founder Chris Slattery of the New York-based Expectant Mothers Care, urged pro-life advocates in Ireland to launch “alternative to abortion” centres aimed at those with unplanned pregnancies, reported [the Irish Times](#).

“Pro-life outreach” to expectant mothers is needed in Ireland given the “now, inevitable, upcoming launch of abortion facilities, sooner or later,” said Slattery, who travelled to Dublin to campaign to save the amendment.



People celebrate Ireland repealing abortion restrictions. (PHOTO: Reuters)

### **International response to the repeal**

"They're calling it a landslide – I call it a national tragedy," Franklin Graham posted to Facebook.

[Charisma News](#) reports Graham as going on to say:

"So now, what they have decided is that the stronger have the right to take the life of the weaker. At least 33% of the country got it right. Just because the majority who voted say that murdering the unborn should be legal, doesn't mean that it's right. Just because the Hutus in Rwanda had a majority and wanted to kill all the Tutsis, that doesn't make it right. For many years in the United States, the majority thought slavery was okay and should be legal, but that doesn't make it right. No matter what country you live in, everyone needs to remember that you will stand before God one day and give an account for your actions – and it may be sooner than later."

Human Life International Ireland described the referendum as "a day when we, as a nation, have rejected God by rejecting the unborn children He will gift us with – little ones, made in His image and likeness," in a Saturday statement from executive director Patrick McCrystal.

The Knock-based affiliate of American Human Life International is going to “tackle the roots of the crisis” by educating people on the “eternal, unchanging and liberating truths of the Catholic faith,” beginning with a conference on *Humanae Vitae* in Dublin this summer.

“There has been an unprecedented amount of prayer and fasting in the build-up to this moment from the remnant of the faithful in this country, and around the world. We have repented. We have wept for the sins of our people, and we are convinced that the Lord has heard our prayers,” McCrystal wrote.

“We must endure this pain as a purification for our collective sins and then we must step forward in total faith that the Lord will rescue His beloved people. Following the crucifixion is the resurrection and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit,” he added.

“With God’s help, as a nation, we will rise again.”