

UK Parliament votes to ban abortion on basis of sex

MPs have voted overwhelmingly in favour of a motion declaring that sex-selection abortion is illegal.

They voted 181 to 1 for a motion brought forward by a cross-party alliance of MPs in an effort to end uncertainty over whether doctors can be prosecuted for the practice. It will now have a second reading in January.

Confusion over the law was exposed last year by the decision of the then Director of Public Prosecutions, Sir Keir Starmer, not to bring charges against two doctors caught on camera agreeing to arrange abortions of baby girls purely because of their sex, in a Telegraph investigation.

Fiona Bruce, the Conservative MP said Britain's biggest abortion provider is failing in its duty to condemn gender-based terminations by refusing to tell pregnant women that they are illegal.

She told the Commons: "It is a shame that this clarification is needed. Successive health ministers and even the Prime Minister have been very clear they state that abortion for reasons of gender alone is illegal. The Prime Minister has described the practice as appalling but they are being ignored.

Some campaigners say that the abortion act must protect women who are under often violent pressure from partners to have a male child.

Mrs Bruce added: "I find it deplorable that anyone would be satisfied to provide a sex selective abortion to a woman who after she has had it is then sent afterwards back to an abusive partner. What needs to be addressed in these dire circumstances is the abuse itself. That is one of the aims of this bill."

Read full original article: MPs vote to make sex selection abortion illegal