Thank you for this opportunity to present to the Joint Committee on Health. I am aware that you will be concerned about providing justice and care towards those the seeking and providing reproductive interventions. Today I hope to heighten your awareness for there to be appropriate care for justice for the other stake holder groups; namely those used as donors and those conceived from these practices. Firstly i appeal for the acknowledgement that donors who become genetic parents and those produced from them ARE stakeholders and secondly that they must be given equal or even greater representation than the others owning to their special vulnerability to risks yet to be understood. International developments in regard to the legal and social recognition of the rights of these groups has been incremental and has taken decades and court cases of sheer determination.

The four items i have drawn to your attention are chosen for this reason. They demonstrate that it has taken the lifetimes of people from the present and past to start to shine a specialised light on what the implications and impacts are from these developments. We seek to broaden the understanding and resolve to protect the Best interests of the child from reproductive technology. Dr Alexina McWhinnie and Pauline Ley have been awarded an MBE and Order of Australia respectively for their lifetimes of work for donor offspring. Their contributions are informed by their commitment and understanding of identity needs and rights which have been drawn from adoption. Dr Alexian WcWhinnie was an expert witness in my high court case and victory against my own government and Pauline Ley helped greatly with Narells law. This Law developed from the avoidable death and public plight of a young donor offspring from misleading and incorrect medical history. Albert Franzt an international professional pianist, and another donor offspring recently gave a speech to the United Nations Diplomatic Council that also details progressive legal developments, hard won by donor offspring in Europe and in terms of Human Rights. In his speech he appeals for more care, justice and inclusion for us as a group.

Sadly the best interests of the Child created from this AHR Bill 2017 are not even a consideration. Their interests and legal recognition is reduced to "welfare taken into consideration... as far as is practicable". I would like to reflect on these words and the degradation of legal protection and discrimination accorded to this group. I wonder if it is legal to provide such discriminatory approaches to this particular group of Child. I am proud to stand amongst the people that resist this.

Pauline Ley and Alexiana McWhinnie have shone a candle of light and hope when there has been the domination of one group’s interests over another's. For the children who are produced by these practices in Ireland, i hope they will find solace from such people if legislation progresses as it stands. They will know that people stood up against the odds to speak for them. To warn of their identity rights and kinship disruption in the clamour to provide a child for the childless.

Your draft Bill speaks with confidence about providing counselling and informed consent about the implications and consequences of these practices. I see this as false reassurance because of the dominance of the other two stakeholder groups in planned committees, in them providing counselling and in the overall considerations provided by this Bill. There are
times when the interests of the different stakeholder groups do and will clash and i see little in place to counter this conflict of interests.

Reproductive technology is a social experiment and the adverse impacts and consequences are unravelling over time around the world. The final attachment provide details some of the activities of proactive donor offspring around the world. It is only they that can inform on these things. We pay for our own counselling, genetic tests to find lost relatives and live with false birth certificates and absent or miss leading medical histories. We have replaced ethnicities and ancestors, unparalleled numbers of siblings and half siblings and all this confronts most of us privately in adulthood. There is little understanding of the resultant grief and its disenfranchisement by our families and community at large.

All this has also happened while in Ireland there has been public outrage and concurrent apologies this year about the illegal adoptions and falsified and misleading birth certificates that have prevailed in the past. Theresa Hiney (head of Adopted Illegally Ireland) and Emma O'Friel, Susan Lohan and i have been painfully aware the same thing has simultaneously been occurring now under the guise of medical "treatment" in reproductive technology. Donor conception is about child production not child protection. Contrasting with adoption is also the fact that Intended parents are not even screened and yet the donors are. What justification can be used for this? I will never support the intentional severance of the relationships of genetic kin for any cause other than a last resort for child protection. However, for those that are created and harmed by the practice, i have demonstrated that there is a plethora of voices to inform your committees and laws. Voices able to counter the conflict of interested by the over representation of the industry and its users.

There are plans in the AHR Bill to create scientific and ethical advisory committees to oversee this practice. I would like to suggest that your committees and consolations regarding present and future practice of reproductive technology, involve those that head your adoptive rights campaigns, along with professional who understand the long term impacts of adoption, kinship loss and displacement and those that are already conceived from such practices. Planned legislation will legalise conception from people that died up to 10 yrs previously, promoting conception with no intention of the genetic parent re named "donor" ever taking responsibility, for numerous children in numerous families. For surrogacy, to allow the fragmentation and sacrifice of children's maternal integrity. No one knows the consequences as the industry expands. I whole heartedly appeal to you to remember your past and the pain that has come to light in the likes of Philomena , to us allow us to be involved fully in the present in order to create a brighter future.