

# abortion — a trade union issue

join the campaign to defend and  
extend women's abortion rights



"Abortion Rights are  
vital for women's rights.  
Trade unionists must  
act together to defend a  
woman's right to choose."

Frances O'Grady,  
TUC Deputy General  
Secretary



Abortion Rights  
the national pro-choice campaign

[www.abortionrights.org.uk](http://www.abortionrights.org.uk)

# Women's right to choose — a trade union issue

Access to free, safe, legal abortion is crucial to women's economic, educational and social advancement and is supported by the great majority of people in Britain. Barriers to reproductive rights are barriers to full social, economic, political and workplace equality.

The trade union movement has a proud history of advancing women's rights and defending reproductive choice whenever it has come under attack.

In 2008, when anti-abortion amendments to the government's Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill threatened to lower the abortion time limit from 24 weeks, the support of trade unionists across Britain was vital to Abortion Rights' campaign to protect reproductive rights.

The unanimous agreement at TUC Congress 2008 to support women's right to choose abortion was crucial to the campaign, and the decisive defeat of all the anti-abortion amendments was a huge victory for the pro-choice movement, for trade unionists and for women everywhere.

Huge progress has been made in recent years in improving access to abortion services in this country. We need your support to safeguard these gains and to strongly oppose future attacks on abortion rights in the coming years.

## Abortion in Britain — the figures

- 83%** of people in Britain support a woman's right to choose
- 1 in 3** women will need an abortion at some point in their lives
- 90%** of abortions in England and Wales take place in the first 13 weeks
- 1.5%** are carried out after 20 weeks
- 80,000** women have travelled from Northern Ireland seeking access to safe abortion since 1967
- 5** women have died from unsafe abortion practices since Northern Ireland was excluded from the 1967 Act\*

\*GfK NOP polling on behalf of Abortion Rights Oct 2007: <http://abortionrights.org.uk/content/view/full/218/10/>; RCOG, Care of women requesting induced abortion, 2004; Department of Health, Abortion Statistics, England and Wales 2008, May 2009; fpa Northern Ireland

# Time for a modern abortion law

Forty years on from the enactment of the 1967 Abortion Act, women can still face distressing delays and unequal access to abortion services across Britain.

**Abortion Rights is fighting for a modern abortion law fit for the 21st century:**

- Abortion should be legally available at the request of the woman; we oppose any reduction in time limit and the imposition of 'cooling off' periods and mandatory counselling
- Extend rights to Northern Ireland. Women in Northern Ireland are still routinely denied access to NHS abortion services even in cases of rape, incest or foetal abnormality
- Remove the requirement for two doctors to approve every abortion
- Allow early abortions to be carried out in GPs surgeries and trained nurses
- Ban misleading advertising of crisis pregnancy services operated by groups opposed to abortion

## What YOU can do

- Affiliate your branch, regional or national union to Abortion Rights
- Join as an individual member
- Sign up to receive email alerts at [www.abortionrights.org.uk](http://www.abortionrights.org.uk)
- Ensure your trade union/branch has a pro-choice policy
- Invite Abortion Rights to speak at meetings
- Support Abortion Rights' campaigning initiatives and distribute pro-choice literature
- Raise funds by playing our 'Pro-Choice Draw'
- Link your union website to [www.abortionrights.org.uk](http://www.abortionrights.org.uk)

## A global issue

President Obama's repeal of George Bush's Global Gag funding restriction, which has devastated reproductive health and rights for the past eight years, was a victory for abortion rights — and human rights — worldwide. Yet each year 20 million, mostly poor, women are still driven to seek unsafe 'back street' abortions — with 70,000 lives lost as a result\*.

\*Lancet 2007, 370: 1338-45, 'Induced Abortion: rates and trends worldwide'; WHO Geneva, 2007: 'Unsafe abortion: global and regional estimates of incidence of unsafe abortion and associated mortality'

# We would like to join

Please join Abortion Rights today, help defend and extend women's reproductive rights.

I/my organisation agree/s to the aims of Abortion Rights and would like to join/affiliate

Signature..... Date .....

Organisation .....

Individual name/contact and position .....

Address.....

.....Postcode .....

Email.....Tel.....

## Membership options

Abortion Rights is a non-profit making organisation, which relies on affiliation fees and donations to campaign – your support will make a real difference to what we can achieve.

### Annual affiliation / membership rates

Individuals: Standard £20  Concessions: low/unwaged £10

Organisations: National £175  Regional £75  Local £40

Donation: £ .....

Cheques should be made payable to 'Abortion Rights'

Please return completed form to: Abortion Rights, 18 Ashwin Street, London, E8 2AZ.

Join online today! Visit [www.abortionrights.org.uk](http://www.abortionrights.org.uk) and join with PayPal



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