

Sex-Selective Abortion Trend Spurs Government Call to Record Fetus Gender

A Tory MP has called on the government to monitor the gender of aborted fetuses in the United Kingdom in a debate in Parliament.

It comes after the Department of Health recently raised concerns about potential illegal **abortions** on the grounds of sex being carried out in the country.

Fiona Bruce, MP for Congleton, said in the debate Tuesday that if they are to condemn the gender abortion practices of China and India, they must “be ready to condemn and challenge any suggestion that gendercide is taking place in the U.K.”

Bruce gained cross-party support from more than 50 MPs to campaign for statistics to be compiled on gender ratios of aborted fetuses.

Bruce’s Ten Minute Rule bill on the topic was jointly introduced with Labour MP Jim Dobbin. A Ten Minute Rule bill is generally used to raise an issue for debate in Parliament rather than to change the law.

An investigation by *The Daily Telegraph* last year uncovered evidence that doctors were agreeing to terminate pregnancies purely because of the gender of the fetus.

Bruce also highlighted the potential increase in gender abortions because of developments in prenatal technology, which means the sex of a baby can be discovered at just 10 weeks gestation.

Bruce said a key purpose of her bill is to raise “concerns about **abortion** on the grounds of sex selection taking place in

the U.K., and to remind us all, whether regulators, prosecuting authorities, doctors, the Department of Health or, crucially, Ministers, that we cannot turn a blind eye to the issue and should be proactive in preventing, challenging and stopping it as something that is wholly unacceptable in the U.K., as well as abroad.”

In January, the Department of Health confirmed in an answer to Lord Alton that there are discrepancies in the balance between the number of boys and girls born in the U.K. to some groups of women that “potentially fall outside of the range considered possible without intervention.”

But the health minister, Earl Howe, has also said measures to monitor the sex of aborted babies would cost too much and might upset mothers.

On Monday, the Department of Health released a consultation on abortion statistics “to ensure that the reports remain relevant and useful.”

Bruce says she hopes the public will support her call for statistics on the gender of aborted fetuses to be included.

A second reading of the Abortion Statistics bill will take place April 26.