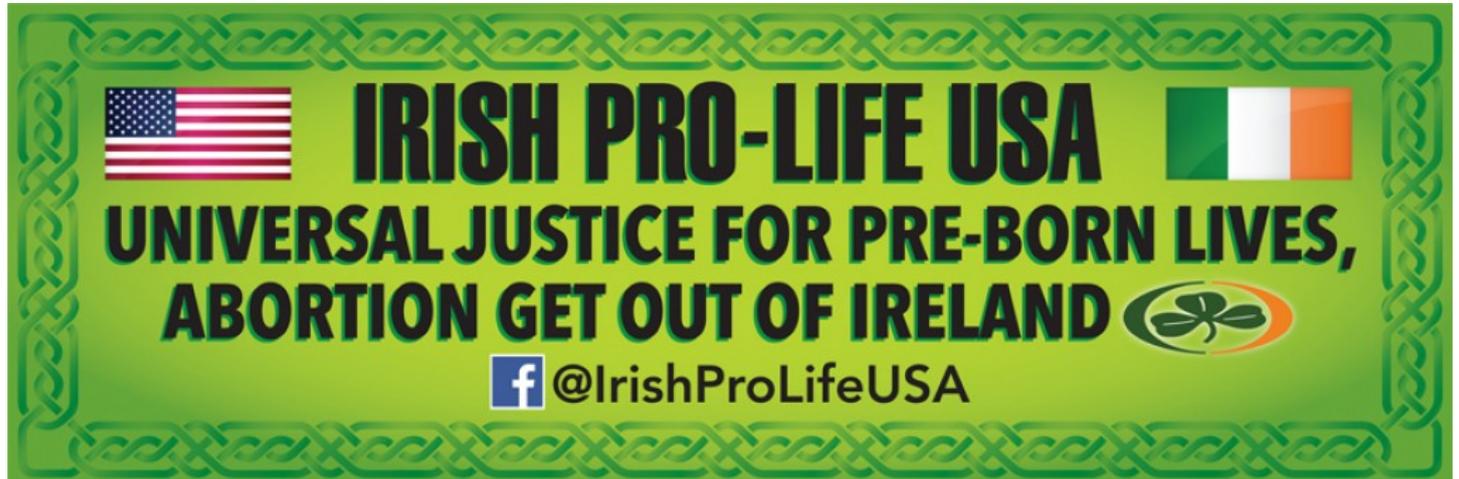


New York's Irish Consulate Rejects Application By Pro-Life Group

Organizers Call Consulate "Tax-Payer-Funded, Pro-Abortion, Increasingly Secular PC Outpost."



New York City, Mar 13, 2019 (IssueWire.com) - The organizers of an event intended to celebrate the pro-life heritage and historical contributions of the Irish diaspora in America—in protecting human life and opposing legalized abortion— have expressed disappointment and alarm at the New York Irish Consulate's decision to turn down its application to stage the inaugural event at the Consulate.

The event would have showcased the legacy and extraordinary work in the US of ordinary Irish American citizens and residents—including religious, civil servants, first responders, military and police officers, homemakers, corporate executives, labor leaders, lawmakers and many others—who humbly dedicated their lives to the preservation and dignity of human life, from conception to natural death. Some of these same pro-life champions established homeless shelters, soup kitchens, schools and hospitals, and alternatives to abortion, such as crisis pregnancy intervention programs.

The event, in the early planning stage, viewed the Irish Consulate as an ideal venue. The Consulate regularly hosts Irish American cultural and business gatherings. But the Consulate shot down the pro-life heritage idea proposed by Irish Pro-Life USA.

"In hindsight, we were not exactly surprised given the sad turn to the ideological left of Ireland's government under An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar," said John Aidan Byrne, founder and president of Irish Pro-Life USA, the grassroots group of pro-life friends of Ireland in the US. "Leo Varadkar and his Fine Gael-led government, campaigned for and then shamelessly celebrated the introduction of extreme and cruel abortion services in Ireland, paid for by hard-pressed Irish taxpayers, even if these taxpayers have a conscientious objection to abortion."

Another Irish-American pro-life leader was also upset.

"It is a very sad day for the Irish American community when a major consular office of Ireland in a major US city – a satellite of the Irish government abroad– rejects a sensible and worthy petition to host a pro-family event at its offices in Manhattan," said Chris Slattery, founder and CEO of the pro-life Expectant

Mother Care/EMC Frontline Pregnancy Centers in New York City. “This event aims to honour individuals, organization and members of the Catholic Church and other faiths who have defended the sanctity and dignity of human life from conception until natural death,” added Slattery. “The Irish Diaspora have been let down by the Irish Consulate in New York by its misguided and ill-judged decision.

Byrne said the staff and leaders at the Consulate have always been unfailingly polite and professional. Last year, the Consulate hosted a delegation of Irish-American pro-life activists opposed to the repeal of Ireland’s pro-life Eighth Amendment. Sadly, Irish voters ultimately repealed the Amendment. Byrne, a dual US and Irish citizen who grew up in Ireland, led the Consulate delegation, which included Slattery; Dr. Patrick McSharry of Co. Sligo, Ireland, then at the Harvard School of Public Health; Marcella Taggart, a nurse from Dublin, Ireland working in the New York metro area; and Steven Aden of Americans United for Life. The Consulate was warm and welcoming, Byrne recalled.

“Today, it seems that recognizing, promoting and celebrating pro-life values is anathema to the Irish Consulate in New York, which is now a tax-payer-funded, pro-abortion, increasingly secular PC outpost of the Irish government that snubs the Irish Diaspora’s and Ireland’s traditional values and Christian faith,” Byrne said. “It is now firmly under the thumb of a government in Dublin hostile to life-affirming values – and our strong Christian and Catholic heritage – that have served the Irish nation and its exiles very well for generations.”

The Consulate initially rejected the petition by Irish Pro-Life USA to host the event either this March or April, citing “our calendar commitments for the month of March and April,” presumably a reference to the heavy schedule of events before and after surrounding the feast day of St. Patrick on March 17. Indeed, it was this special celebration that inspired the Irish pro-life group to consider March and April. When the pro-life group said it was prepared to host the event at later dates, the Consulate also shot down that proposal. “The Consulate cannot host political events,” noted the Irish Consulate in New York, in an e-mail response to Byrne that surprised him.

In reply, Byrne e-mailed the Consulate to remind this Irish government agency in New York City that the non-profit, US-based pro-life group, Irish Pro-Life USA, is not a political party and the proposed Consulate event was “non-political.” The group said it would be delighted if the Consulate has a change of heart.

“We have certainly supported and promoted – and will continue to do so – pro-life lawmakers and politicians affiliated with different political parties in Ireland, in the US and worldwide, but we are not a political party,” Byrne said in a statement. “Unfortunately, Ireland’s diplomatic mission in New York, the Irish Consulate, would now appear to be taking direct orders with blind obedience from a morally bankrupt government in Ireland.”

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