



For Immediate Release, 25th September 2012

JFM calls for dignified debate on Magdalene Laundries

Justice for Magdalenes (JFM), the survivor advocacy group, has asked for a dignified debate of a motion on the Magdalene Laundries this week in the Dáil. The motion tabled by the Sinn Féin party will be debated during Private Member Business in Dáil Éireann on Tuesday and Wednesday evening. JFM endorses the motion as reasonable and driven by survivors' pressing needs.

The government should address these needs immediately and survivors can no longer be asked to wait until the publication of the Inter-Departmental Committee's final report. Simply put, many women just don't have that time. They need help now.

JFM last week provided every TD and Senator with a redacted copy of its recent principal submission to the Inter-Departmental Committee investigating State involvement with the Magdalene Laundries. We did so with survivors' consent and identities have been protected. We encourage all Oireachtas members to read the document in the context of the debate

The historical record will show that the Justice for Magdalenes Campaign has been supported by politicians at every level, from every political party and by a range of Independents. We hope that this wide measure of support will continue and voices from all parties register their part in the imminent debate.

Our anxiety to build consensus is driven by the understanding that if there is not a clear and strong endorsement of the motion by Dáil Éireann, the women who were held in the Magdalene Laundries will yet again receive the message that their experiences, their lives are not worthy of dignity nor respect. We look forward to a thorough and considerate discussion of the issue.

[ENDS]

Contact Details:

Claire McGettrick [PRO], Ireland—353-(0)86-3659516, clairemcgettrick@gmail.com

Mari Steed, Philadelphia—(00)1-215-589-9329, mari_tee@yahoo.com

Katherine O'Donnell, Dublin—353-(0)1-716-7323,087-961-2163 katherine.odonnell@ucd.ie

James M. Smith, Boston College—(00)1-617-552-1596, james.smith.2@bc.edu

Maeve O'Rourke, London—(00) 44-74-0330-1781, maeveorourke@gmail.com

Notes to editors:

JFM Summary of State Involvement with the Magdalene Laundries:

http://www.magdalenelaundries.com/Magdalene_Laundries_state_interaction_section_Final.pdf

JFM Follow-up report to United Nations Committee Against Torture:

http://www.magdalenelaundries.com/JFM_UNCAT_Follow%20Up_Complete.pdf

Minister Shatter's Press Release regarding delay in Inter-Departmental Committee Report:

<http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR12000249>

JFM Campaign Summary to Date (includes historical context, State involvement and campaign milestones):

http://www.magdalenelaundries.com/jfm_campaign_summary_2012.pdf

JFM website (with links to recent press releases and other reports):

<http://www.magdalenelaundries.com>