



THE IRISH TIMES

Zappone to chair debate grand final

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The grand final of *The Irish Times* Debate takes place this evening with the motion: "This house believes the women of Ireland should strike to repeal the Eighth Amendment."

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Katherine Zappone will chair the contest.

The editor of *The Irish Times*, Kevin O'Sullivan, DIT head of law Deirdre McGowan and debating coach Prof Brent Northup will act as adjudicators alongside previous win-

ners Kate Brady and Aaron Vickery.

The Irish Times Debate is the oldest continuous intervarsity debating competition in Ireland, having been set up on an all-island basis in 1960 to promote excellence in oratory and debating.

More than 300 third-level students entered the competition in October and the numbers have since been whittled down to 12 following the semi-finals in January.

The debate will feature competitors from Trinity College,

University College Dublin, University College Cork and the Solicitors' Apprentice Debating Society of Ireland.

It is open to the public and takes place at 7pm in the Michael O'Donnell Theatre in Dublin Institute of Technology, Bolton Street.

Trophy

Four teams of two will compete for the Demosthenes trophy and four individuals will vie for the Christina Murphy Memorial Trophy.

Since 1980, the National Par-

liamentary Debate Association of America has invited the winners of *The Irish Times* Debate to participate in a debating tour of the United States.

Previous winners include broadcaster Marian Finucane, comedian Dara O'Briain, writer Gerry Stembridge and Eoin McCullough SC, as well as Supreme Court Judge Donal O'Donnell and the late Adrian Hardiman.

President Michael D Higgins, former president Mary Robinson and former tánaiste Mary Harney were finalists.