

11-03-2019

"That Cork County Council asks the government, and members of the Joint Committee on Communications Climate Action and Environment (both TDs and Senators) to bring the Petroleum and Other Minerals Development (Amendment) (Climate Emergency Measures) Bill before the Dáil for consideration such that in this time of climate emergency it may be considered for passing into legislation, with or without appropriate amendments, without delay as an acknowledgment of the fact that we face a climate emergency and cannot hope to limit global temperature rises without leaving 80% of already proven reserves in the ground."

My original:

"That Cork County Council asks the government, both TDs and Senators, to bring the Petroleum and Other Minerals Development (Amendment) (Climate Emergency Measures) Bill before the Dáil for consideration such that in this time of climate emergency it may be considered for passing into legislation, with or without appropriate amendments, without delay."

Brid Smith's proposed amendment:

That Cork County Council asks the government, and members of the Joint Committee on Communications Climate Action and Environment, (both TDs and Senators), to allow the Petroleum and Other Minerals Development (Amendment) (Climate Emergency Measures) Bill progress to Select Committee stage as voted by the Dail last February, that this should happen without delay as an acknowledgment of the fact that we face a climate emergency and cannot hope to limit global temperature rises without leaving 80% of already proven reserves in the ground"

In February 2018, a year ago, a Dáil majority voted to support the principle of the Petroleum and Other Minerals Development (Amendment) (Climate Emergency Measures) Bill which calls for a ban on the issuing of licences for exploration of fossil fuels off Ireland's coasts. The Dáil unanimously agreed to refer the Bill to the relevant Select Committee of TDs for detailed scrutiny. Senators were included in the deliberations. In December 2018, the committee was expected to send a report to the Dail and the Bill would then have gone to another committee for any amendments. But the Joint Committee was deadlocked and since then the Bill has been caught in a procedural dispute as to whether it needs a majority of the Joint Committee of TDs and Senators to progress it or just a majority of the Select Committee of TDs only.

We are in a climate emergency. Globally, temperatures have already increased by almost 1° Celsius which is enough over time to melt half the ice in the Arctic and also creating the basis for a massive increased occurrence of extreme weather events, including droughts and floods. Long-term forecasts predict that global warming could temporarily hit 1.5C above pre-industrial levels over the next four years.³ This level of temperature rise is already having devastating impacts on the planet. Global populations of fish, birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles have declined on average by 60% between 1970 and 2014.⁴ The number of climate-related disasters such as extreme heat, drought, floods and storms has doubled between 1990 and 2018. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) has warned that the next ten years will be the most important in our history in making a fast and fair transition to a decarbonised economy.

If we exploit all the fossil fuel reserves already on the books of fossil fuel companies, it would result in a rise in global temperatures well in excess of the temperature limits agreed to in the Paris Agreement. The expert consensus is that 80% already-known fossil fuel reserves must stay in the ground if we are to limit global warming to 2 deg.C. It makes no sense to explore for more fossil fuels that cannot be burned.

Ireland's current path will see us missing our 2020 climate and energy emission reduction targets. Rather than decrease, our greenhouse gas emissions actually increased by 7% since 2015. If we continue as we are, it will be virtually impossible to make our 2030 targets. According to the 2018 climate change performance index, Ireland is the worst performing country in Europe in terms of taking action. It is in first place in the volume of emissions per person in Europe and is eighth highest in the world. Enacting this Bill would send a global signal that Ireland recognises that the world is in a state of climate emergency, that the next decade is critical and that we will pursue our energy security, jobs and other social and economic goals without the option of new fossil fuel reserve development.

If we do this, Ireland would be the fifth country globally to ban fossil fuel exploration. In France in 2017, for example, legislation was passed to end new licences for fossil fuel exploration and to cease all oil and gas extraction by 2040.

People all around Ireland and around the world recognise that we are in a climate emergency. Tens of thousands of people will take part in climate marches all around the world at the end of this week. And yet the Climate Emergency Bill is stuck in a procedural limbo such that it cannot be voted on by the legislators whom those same people voted into office.

Want support for

1) Amend the motion slightly:

"That Cork County Council asks the government, and members of the Joint Committee on Communications Climate Action and Environment (both TDs and Senators) to bring the Petroleum and Other Minerals Development (Amendment) (Climate Emergency Measures) Bill before the Dáil for consideration such that in this time of climate emergency it may be considered for passing into legislation, with or without appropriate amendments, without delay as an acknowledgment of the fact that we face a climate emergency and cannot hope to limit global temperature rises without leaving 80% of already proven reserves in the ground."

2) This motion would be circulated to all local authorities so that they can lend the support of

would love if the message went to the students that they have our support. They are looking for more than just words, they are looking for action.