

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, July 5, 2019.

Money Message Obstructs Climate Bill

Yesterday, the Government blocked the Climate Emergency Measures Bill from reaching the committee debate stage, by failing to attach a 'Money Message' to it.

Dr Ciara Murphy, Environmental Policy Advocate of the Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice is strongly critical of the procedural obstruction by Government, saying "The failure of the recently published Climate Action Plan is compounded by the obstruction of the Climate Emergency Measures Bill, and the declaration by Leo Varadkar on May 10th of a climate emergency in Ireland is exposed as mere tokenism."

The Climate Emergency Measures Bill was a fundamental first step to make this pronouncement meaningful. It intended to ban issuing of further licenses for fossil fuel extraction. This basic measure – keeping it in the ground – is a bare minimum to achieve any kind of climate mitigation.

Michael Brennan, Political Editor of the Sunday Business Post has posted a tweet indicating that Brid Smith can expect a response from the Government regarding this matter.

'Cabinet approves submitting of reasoned response to Brid Smith Td to explain why it is using a money message to block her bill banning further offshore exploration for oil and gas. She has been very critical of this.'

The blocking of this Bill shows a Government in denial about the magnitude of the environmental crisis. When parliament fails, democracy is left with two courses of action – protest, which we have seen through the Youth Climate Strikes, and the courts, such as the High Court action by Climate Case Ireland earlier this year.

ENDS

Notes for the Editor:

1. The Climate Emergency Measures Bill was initiated on the 30th Jan 2018
2. Friends of the Irish Environment under the banner 'Climate Case Ireland' is taking legal action against the Irish Government's failure to take the required action to avert dangerous climate change.
3. Article 17.2 of the Constitution provides that the Dáil shall not appropriate public money for any purpose unless the Government has first recommended that purpose to the Dáil by a Money Message signed by the Taoiseach. <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/government-relying-on-little-known-rule-to-block-bills-1.3133081>
4. Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice submission to the Department of Finance consultation on Carbon Tax. <https://www.jcfj.ie/jcfj.ie/news/65-environment-news/666-jcfj-carbon-tax-submission>