

Dáil Committee Stage of the Employment (Collective Redundancies and Miscellaneous Provisions) and Companies (Amendment) Bill 2023

Opening Statement

Neale Richmond, T.D., Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail

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Thank you, Chair, for making committee time available to further progress the Employment (Collective Redundancies and Miscellaneous Provisions) and Companies (Amendment) Bill 2023. We had a very good debate at Second Stage in the Dáil and my strong impression at the time was that in general Deputies are very supportive of the Bill and want to see it enacted as soon as possible.

I would also like to thank the Oireachtas Committee members who recently met with Department officials to discuss the proposed statutory advisory body on employment and redundancy matters, the Employment Law Review Group. The discussion was engaging and informative with a particular focus on the balance of the membership and the distinctive roles between the Review Group and the Enterprise and Employment Sub-Group of the Labour Employer Economic Forum.

This Bill is an important piece of legislation which will further enhance the protection of employees in a collective redundancy in a way that does not unduly impede enterprises in the conduct of their business. It arises from the commitment in the *Programme for Government* to review whether the legal provisions surrounding collective redundancies and the liquidation of companies effectively protect the rights of workers.

The '*Plan of Action on Collective Redundancies following Insolvency*', published in June 2021 and welcomed by the social partners, principally addresses matters relating to employment rights and company law and seeks to further supplement the already robust

legislative protections and safeguards afforded to employees involved in corporate insolvency.

In the development of the *Plan of Action*, as well as the Bill itself, extensive and productive stakeholder engagement was carried out. This Bill represents the outcome of this engagement and the Department's consideration of reports published pertaining to these matters. In the development of the Bill the Department further took into consideration recommendations made by ICTU and which Members can see reflected in the Bill.

I am aware a number of amendments have been put forward and I thank the Deputies for their contributions.

Significant progress has already been achieved in delivering on the various actions set out in the *Plan of Action*. This Bill marks an important step forward in implementing the key outstanding employment law and company law legislative commitments made and I look forward to our discussion today.

Thank you Chair.