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Friday,
28 August
2026

DÍOSPÓIREACHTAÍ PARLAIMINTE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

DÁIL ÉIREANN

TUAIRISC OIFIGIÚIL—Neamhcheartaithe
(OFFICIAL REPORT—Unrevised)

Gnó na Dála - Business of Dáil	397
Mineral Oil Tax: Financial Resolution	401

DÁIL ÉIREANN

Dé hAoine, 28 Lúnasa 2026

Friday, 28 August 2026

Chuaigh an Ceann Comhairle i gceannas ar 12 p.m.

Paidir agus Machnamh.

Prayer and Reflection.

Gnó na Dála - Business of Dáil

An Ceann Comhairle: Members are very enthusiastic. Good afternoon and welcome to our recall sitting. On 21 August last, the Taoiseach requested me by letter, under Standing Order 26(1), to summon Dáil Éireann to meet today, 28 August 2026, at 12 noon for the purposes of taking a financial resolution. The business of today's special sitting is confined to the financial resolution unless the House otherwise orders. I call on the Chief Whip to move the proposal in relation to the arrangements for today's business, please.

Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach (Deputy Mary Butler): I move:

Notwithstanding anything in Standing Order 217, in relation to the Financial Motion by the Minister for Finance [2026], the following arrangements shall apply:

1. the proceedings on the motion shall, if not previously concluded, be brought to a conclusion after 60 minutes: Provided that where any amendments are not disposed of within the 60 minutes, the question put on the motion shall also dispose of any amendments tabled to that motion;
2. the order of speaking and allocation of time shall be as follows:
 - opening speech by a Minister or Minister of State – 10 minutes;
 - speeches by representatives of Sinn Féin, Social Democrats, the Labour Party, Independent and Parties Technical Group, and Independent Technical Group – 7.5 minutes per party or group;
 - speeches by Other Members – 7.5 minutes; and
 - a speech in response by the Minister – 5 minutes;
3. members may share time; and
4. any divisions demanded shall be taken immediately.

An Ceann Comhairle: Is the proposal agreed to? Not agreed. The same procedure applies. I call Deputy Mac Lochlainn.

Deputy Pádraig Mac Lochlainn: It has been six weeks since we last gathered here. Prices are going through the roof, there is a serious crisis out there and the Government has allocated just one hour today - seven and a half minutes per grouping or party - to deal with this serious issue. It has also tried to prevent amendments being taken by limiting it to 60 minutes. This is just unacceptable. We have been shut down for six weeks. People out there are struggling and need absolute clarity that the Government will not introduce these excise charges again, as it plans.

An Ceann Comhairle: I call Deputy O'Callaghan. Members have 30 seconds each.

Deputy Cian O'Callaghan: The cost-of-living crisis is putting huge pressure on households around the country. This Government is showing contempt and disdain for those households by giving the bare minimum of 60 minutes for this proposal to be discussed and scrutinised here. Why is it afraid of proper scrutiny and discussion of the proposal and why is it afraid of people putting forward alternatives?

Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett: To provide an hour for this debate is a pathetic admission of the failure of Government policy to address an entirely predictable situation in terms of petrol prices and the cost of living. The Government does not even want to discuss it but has been forced, because of the fear of public outrage and protest, to have this reconvening of the Dáil. It wants to curtail the debate so we do not actually get to discuss the cost-of-living crisis that is affecting hundreds of thousands of working people and families in this country. It is pathetic.

Deputy Michael Collins: One hour for debate on such an important issue today is very unfair to the people of this country - the people who cannot pay their energy bills and the people pulling up to the filling stations who cannot pay for their fuel. We have found out today that part of this debate will kick out the farmers' rebate for farming contractors. That will not be tolerated. It could lead to strikes in this country, which we do not need to see again. We need further and proper debate today in this Dáil.

Deputy Mary Butler: I have heard the contributions from the Members opposite. Every single Member of this House agreed to the recess. There was not one person who objected to it, just for the record of the Dáil and so people listening will know.

To be clear, we are here today to ensure excise increases on petrol and diesel do not go ahead next week or in October. There is a single financial resolution before the House today. The time allocated for debate, one hour, is exactly the same as we had for four previous financial resolutions in March and April. We are not here today to announce the budget; that will happen on 6 October.

The public await the certainty that the cost of filling up at the pumps will not be increasing because of excise increases and we need to get on with providing that certainty.

The proposal for today's business stands.

Question put:

The Dáil divided: Tá, 80; Níl, 71; Staon, 0.		
Tá	Níl	Staon
Aird, William.	Ahern, Ciarán.	
Ardagh, Catherine.	Bacik, Ivana.	
Boland, Grace.	Bennett, Cathy.	
Brabazon, Tom.	Boyd Barrett, Richard.	
Brennan, Brian.	Brady, John.	
Brennan, Shay.	Buckley, Pat.	
Brophy, Colm.	Byrne, Joanna.	
Browne, James.	Cairns, Holly.	
Burke, Colm.	Carthy, Matt.	
Burke, Peter.	Clarke, Sorca.	
Butler, Mary.	Collins, Michael.	
Butterly, Paula.	Conway-Walsh, Rose.	
Buttimer, Jerry.	Coppinger, Ruth.	
Byrne, Thomas.	Cronin, Réada.	
Callaghan, Catherine.	Crowe, Seán.	
Calleary, Dara.	Cullinane, David.	
Canney, Seán.	Cummins, Jen.	
Carrigy, Micheál.	Daly, Pa.	
Carroll MacNeill, Jennifer.	Devine, Máire.	
Chambers, Jack.	Doherty, Pearse.	
Cleere, Peter 'Chap'.	Donnelly, Paul.	
Clendennen, John.	Ellis, Dessie.	
Connolly, John.	Ennis, Daniel.	
Cooney, Joe.	Farrelly, Aidan.	
Crowe, Cathal.	Farrell, Mairéad.	
Cummins, John.	Gannon, Gary.	
Currie, Emer.	Gibney, Sinéad.	
Daly, Martin.	Gogarty, Paul Nicholas.	
Dempsey, Aisling.	Gould, Thomas.	
Devlin, Cormac.	Graves, Ann.	
Dillon, Alan.	Guirke, Johnny.	
Dolan, Albert.	Hayes, Eoin.	
Dooley, Timmy.	Healy-Rae, Danny.	
Feighan, Frankie.	Hearne, Rory.	
Fleming, Sean.	Kelly, Alan.	
Foley, Norma.	Kenny, Eoghan.	
Geoghegan, James.	Kenny, Martin.	
Grealish, Noel.	Kerrane, Claire.	
Harkin, Marian.	Lawless, Paul.	
Harris, Simon.	Mac Lochlainn, Pádraig.	
Healy-Rae, Michael.	McDonald, Mary Lou.	
Heneghan, Barry.	McGettigan, Donna.	
Heydon, Martin.	McGrath, Mattie.	

Higgins, Emer.	McGuinness, Conor D.	
Keogh, Keira.	Mitchell, Denise.	
Kyne, Seán.	Murphy, Paul.	
Lahart, John.	Mythen, Johnny.	
Lawless, James.	Newsome Drennan, Natasha.	
Lowry, Michael.	Ní Raghallaigh, Shónagh.	
Martin, Micheál.	Nolan, Carol.	
McAuliffe, Paul.	O'Callaghan, Cian.	
McCarthy, Noel.	O'Donoghue, Richard.	
McConalogue, Charlie.	O'Donoghue, Robert.	
McCormack, Tony.	O'Flynn, Ken.	
McEntee, Helen.	O'Gorman, Roderic.	
McGrath, Séamus.	O'Hara, Louis.	
McGreehan, Erin.	O'Reilly, Louise.	
Moynihan, Aindrias.	O'Rourke, Darren.	
Moynihan, Michael.	Ó Laoghaire, Donnchadh.	
Moynihan, Shane.	Ó Murchú, Ruairí.	
Murnane O'Connor, Jennifer.	Ó Súilleabháin, Fionntán.	
Naughton, Hildegard.	Quinlivan, Maurice.	
Neville, Joe.	Rice, Pádraig.	
O'Connell, Maeve.	Sheehan, Conor.	
O'Connor, James.	Sherlock, Marie.	
O'Dea, Willie.	Smith, Duncan.	
O'Donnell, Kieran.	Tóibín, Peadar.	
O'Meara, Ryan.	Wall, Mark.	
O'Sullivan, Christopher.	Ward, Charles.	
O'Sullivan, Pádraig.	Ward, Mark.	
Ó Cearúil, Naoise.	Whitmore, Jennifer.	
Ó Muirí, Naoise.		
Richmond, Neale.		
Roche, Peter.		
Smith, Brendan.		
Smyth, Niamh.		
Timmins, Edward.		
Toole, Gillian.		
Troy, Robert.		
Ward, Barry.		

Tellers: Tá, Deputies Mary Butler and Emer Currie; Níl, Deputies Pádraig Mac Lochlainn and Cian O'Callaghan.

Question declared carried.

An Ceann Comhairle: Before I call the Tánaiste, on behalf of Deputy Martin Daly, I welcome a representative from the State Legislature in Louisiana, Mr. Peter Egan. Peter is from Ballygar in Galway, which is Deputy Daly's hometown, and he is here on a trade mission. He is most welcome.

Mineral Oil Tax: Financial Resolution**Tánaiste and Minister for Finance (Deputy Simon Harris):** I move:

(1) THAT for the purposes of the tax charged by virtue of section 95 of the Finance Act 1999 (No. 2 of 1999), that Act be amended, with effect as on and from 29 August 2026, by the substitution of the following for Schedule 2 to that Act (as amended by section 2(3) of the Finance Act 2026 (No. 24 of 2026)):

"SCHEDULE 2**RATES OF MINERAL OIL TAX**

	Light Oil:		Heavy Oil:						Liquefied Petroleum Gas:		
With effect as on	Petrol	Aviation gasoline	Used as a propellant	Used for air navigation	Used for private pleasure navigation	Kerosene used other than as a propellant	Fuel oil	Other heavy oil	Used as a propellant	Other liquefied petroleum gas	Vehicle gas:
10 March 2022	€474.11	€474.11	€413.51	€413.51	€413.51	€84.84	€118.01	€120.55	€118.27	€54.68	€9.36
1 April 2022	€465.98	€465.98	€405.38	€405.38	€405.38	€84.84	€118.01	€120.55	€118.27	€54.68	€9.36
1 May 2022	€465.98	€465.98	€405.38	€405.38	€405.38	€103.83	€141.12	€111.14	€130.52	€66.93	€9.36
12 October 2022	€483.34	€483.34	€425.45	€425.45	€425.45	€103.83	€141.12	€111.14	€130.52	€66.93	€9.36
1 May 2023	€483.34	€483.34	€425.45	€425.45	€425.45	€122.83	€164.23	€131.47	€142.76	€79.17	€9.36
1 June 2023	€532.12	€532.12	€466.10	€466.10	€466.10	€122.83	€164.23	€140.28	€142.76	€79.17	€9.36
1 September 2023	€589.03	€589.03	€506.75	€506.75	€506.75	€122.83	€164.23	€149.09	€142.76	€79.17	€9.36
11 October 2023	€606.39	€606.39	€526.83	€526.83	€526.83	€122.83	€164.23	€149.09	€142.76	€79.17	€9.36
1 April 2024	€638.91	€638.91	€551.22	€551.22	€551.22	€122.83	€164.23	€163.96	€142.76	€79.17	€9.36

1 May 2024	€638.91	€638.91	€551.22	€551.22	€551.22	€141.82	€187.34	€184.30	€155.01	€91.42	€10.13
1 August 2024	€671.43	€671.43	€575.61	€575.61	€575.61	€141.82	€187.34	€199.17	€155.01	€91.42	€10.13
9 October 2024	€688.78	€688.78	€595.68	€595.68	€595.68	€141.82	€187.34	€199.17	€155.01	€91.42	€10.13
1 May 2025	€688.78	€688.78	€595.68	€595.68	€595.68	€160.81	€210.45	€219.50	€167.25	€103.66	€11.48
8 October 2025	€706.14	€706.14	€615.76	€615.76	€615.76	€160.81	€210.45	€219.50	€167.25	€103.66	€11.48
25 March 2026	€584.18	€584.18	€453.15	€453.15	€453.15	€160.81	€210.45	€193.06	€167.25	€103.66	€11.48
15 April 2026	€502.88	€502.88	€371.85	€371.85	€371.85	€160.81	€210.45	€172.14	€167.25	€103.66	€11.48
14 October 2026	€520.23	€520.23	€391.92	€391.92	€391.92	€179.81	€233.57	€192.47	€179.49	€115.90	€12.84
1 November 2026	€560.88	€560.88	€448.83	€448.83	€448.83	€179.81	€233.57	€216.15	€179.49	€115.90	€12.84
1 December 2026	€601.53	€601.53	€505.74	€505.74	€505.74	€179.81	€233.57	€216.15	€179.49	€115.90	€12.84
31 January 2027	€658.44	€658.44	€570.78	€570.78	€570.78	€179.81	€233.57	€239.83	€179.49	€115.90	€12.84
28 February 2027	€723.49	€723.49	€635.83	€635.83	€635.83	€179.81	€233.57	€239.83	€179.49	€115.90	€12.84
1 May 2027	€723.49	€723.49	€635.83	€635.83	€635.83	€198.80	€256.68	€260.16	€191.74	€128.15	€14.20
13 October 2027	€740.85	€740.85	€655.90	€655.90	€655.90	€198.80	€256.68	€260.16	€191.74	€128.15	€14.20
1 May 2028	€740.85	€740.85	€655.90	€655.90	€655.90	€217.80	€279.79	€280.49	€203.98	€140.39	€15.56
11 October 2028	€758.21	€758.21	€675.98	€675.98	€675.98	€217.80	€279.79	€280.49	€203.98	€140.39	€15.56
1 May 2029	€758.21	€758.21	€675.98	€675.98	€675.98	€236.79	€302.90	€300.83	€216.23	€152.64	€16.91
10 October 2029	€773.25	€773.25	€693.38	€693.38	€693.38	€236.79	€302.90	€300.83	€216.23	€152.64	€16.91

1 May 2030	€773. 25	€773.2 5	€693.38	€693.38	€693.38	€253.25	€322. 93	€318. 45	€226.84	€163.25	€18.0 9
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Rates per 1,000 litres

Rates per 1,000 litres

Rates per 1,000 litres

and from:

Rate per megawatt hour at gross calorific value

",."

(2) IT is hereby declared that it is expedient in the public interest that this Resolution shall have statutory effect under the provisions of the Provisional Collection of Taxes Act 1927 (No. 7 of 1927).

I want to begin today by being very clear about what this resolution means for the Irish people. The Government has decided to extend the current temporary excise reductions on petrol and diesel from 31 August until 31 October 2026. The increases that were due to take effect next week will now not happen. Mineral oil tax will, therefore, remain reduced on a VAT-inclusive basis by 30 cent per litre for diesel and 25 cent per litre for petrol until the end of October. We are also extending the temporary reduction applying to marked gas oil, or green diesel.

From November onwards, the current intention is that these temporary measures will be restored on a gradual and phased basis, but as we have done throughout this crisis, the Government continues to monitor developments closely. We look at the international situation, the global energy markets and the price at the pumps, and we take decisions based on the circumstances that actually exist at the time, not predictions that people endeavour to make many months in advance. The decision taken by the Government this week provides certainty for September and October. It provides breathing space for families and businesses, and it ensures that, rather than facing a cliff edge, any restoration of these measures can be managed carefully and responsibly.

The estimated cost to the Exchequer from 1 September 2026 until the final restoration on 28 February 2027 is approximately €407 million. This is, by any measure, a significant intervention. Indeed, as colleagues know, it does not stand alone. Since March, the Government has temporarily reduced mineral oil tax on petrol, diesel and green diesel, and has reduced the NORA levy to a nominal amount. Taken together, these measures have delivered savings or reductions to families and businesses of 32 cent per litre of diesel, 27 cent per litre of petrol and 7.4 cent per litre of green diesel. We increased the maximum repayment rate under the diesel rebate scheme from 7.5 cent to 12 cent per litre of qualifying fuel, supporting the road haulage and passenger transport sectors. We provided an additional €152 payment to fuel allowance recipients. We deferred the scheduled May increase in carbon tax and introduced targeted support for highly affected sectors, road transport operators, farmers, farm contractors and fishers. We have also ensured that the enhanced maximum repayment rate under the diesel rebate scheme will now be extended until the end of this year.

Taken together, this Government will have provided more than €1.3 billion in supports over a 12-month period to assist households and businesses with the increased energy costs arising from the conflict in the Middle East.

This is about helping families who have been affected by events that are taking place thousands of kilometres from their homes. It is about supporting businesses that are watching every single increased cost each into their viability. It is about hauliers, farmers and those in other sectors that are essential to keeping parts of our economy moving. It is about recognising a basic reality: when circumstances change, a responsible Government must be capable of changing with them.

Despite some easing in global prices in recent days, international energy markets remain exceptionally volatile. Nobody in this House knows with certainty where the price of oil will be in November. Nobody knows where it will be in January. Nobody knows what geopolitical development may affect markets next week, never mind next year. The Government has a responsibility to respond to the circumstances in front of us, to use the best information available, to act at the right time and, above all, to act in the interests of the Irish people. That is why we have recalibrated our approach and we will remain nimble to respond into the future. That is responsible decision-making in an uncertain world. That is what this resolution does.

We also have a responsibility to level with the people. No government anywhere in the world can completely insulate a country from a global energy shock. No government can indefinitely use the tax system to cancel movements in international commodity markets. To suggest so is dishonest politics.

There is a much bigger issue here. We should not simply ask how we cushion Ireland from this particular energy shock. We should ask how to make Ireland less vulnerable for the next one. This is the second major fossil fuel shock Ireland has experienced in the space of half a decade. That tells us something. Our dependence on imported fuels is not only an environmental vulnerability but a real economic vulnerability. That is why the green transition cannot be presented as something that is being done to households or businesses. It has to be something that works for households and businesses. Good climate policy is also good economic policy. That is why the Government will continue to support households and businesses to make the transition. We need to make it easier and more affordable for households. We need to continue the roll-out of home energy upgrades and retrofitting. We need to support people who want to move to electric vehicles and ensure the charging infrastructure keeps pace. We need to invest in our electricity grid, as we are doing, and we need to accelerate the development of indigenous renewable energy. The prize here is much bigger than just meeting some sort of target. The prize here is an Ireland where households and businesses have greater control over their own energy costs, an Ireland where businesses have access to secure and competitively priced electricity, and an Ireland that is less exposed every time instability erupts in an oil-producing region of the world.

That work is well under way. The national energy affordability task force is looking at energy costs in the round, not just at what the Government can do during the immediate crisis but at structural changes that can reduce costs over the medium and longer terms. The Minister, Deputy Darragh O'Brien, is leading that work on behalf of the Government and it will continue to be a major focus of our work. Our response must operate on two tracks. We have to help people through the crisis in front of us, but we have to reduce our exposure to the next crisis. These are not competing objectives; they are two parts of the same strategy.

I know that amendments and arguments will be advanced today in relation to carbon tax. Let me deal with that directly. I support the carbon tax, as does the programme for Government.

I know that many Opposition parties support the carbon tax. Over the summer months, my Department published tax strategy papers giving consideration to issues and options around carbon tax, as it does every year. This presents us with an opportunity to have an informed discussion at Government and in the Oireachtas, but these are matters to be considered in the round and in the context of budgetary decisions. Today is not budget day. We have recalled Dáil Éireann for a specific and immediate purpose. Increases at the pump were due to hit motorists next week and we have decided that should not happen. There was an immediate issue requiring an immediate decision and we wish to take that decision today. The budget will provide the appropriate opportunity to consider broader questions around affordability, taxation policies, fuel poverty and how we support households in the here and now with the real cost-of-living pressures they face. That is the responsible way to make policy: examine the evidence, understand the costs and consequences, and make decisions in the round.

If the last six months have taught us anything, it is how rapidly the world can change. Oil prices can rise and fall and supply routes can be disrupted. We have seen enormous movement in energy markets over just a few short weeks. Locking the Irish taxpayer into decisions many months and possibly years in advance, regardless of what happens internationally, is not certainty but imprudence. We are providing certainty where we can do so responsibly. We are providing certainty in September and October, and as a Government, we continue to keep all matters under review. That is the right way to make the right decision on the basis of the facts that exist at this point.

This is what nimble government looks like; it is what agile government looks like and it is what responsible economic management looks like in a volatile world. Today, we take a decision to give households, motorists and businesses some attempt at breathing space, to give some certainty, to avoid an abrupt increase at the pumps next week, and to retain the flexibility as a Government and as an Oireachtas to continue to respond as we see best on cost-of-living matters in the round in the budget in a few short weeks' time. At the same time, we will not lose sight of the longer-term answer. Our approach is clear, namely, breathing space now, certainty where we can provide it but intensive work towards greater energy independence for the future. That is what this resolution is about and is why I commend the resolution to the House.

It is unusual enough for the Dáil to be recalled during a period of recess but it also happens to be recalled at a time when an esteemed member of our political press gallery is covering proceedings in this Chamber for the very final time. For more than four decades, Senan Molony has held those of us in public life to account. Senan has always brought a great sense of wit and humour to his work, together with curiosity, determination and professionalism. So it just so happens, as I move this resolution today on behalf of the Government, I want to join with many across the political divide in wishing you, Senan, and your family every happiness for a long, fulfilling and very well-deserved retirement.

Deputy Mary Lou McDonald: Comhghairdeas leat, Senan. The Dáil has been recalled because the Government got it wrong. Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and the Independents intended to increase petrol and diesel prices from 1 September. We said no and I wrote to the Taoiseach asking that the Dáil be recalled to stop those increases, so here we are today. However, it is clear that the Government has still not got the message because its answer is not to halt fuel tax increases but simply to reschedule them. The Government now proposes increases from

November and to continue those increases through to February. We are, of course, living in extraordinary circumstances. The international factors that are driving fuel prices sky-high are still with us. The pressure this brings and places on workers and families is still with us. While the Government cannot control international geopolitical events or oil prices, it can control the taxes it places on petrol and diesel. People need to know definitively that while fuel prices soar, the Government will not pile on further tax increases when people are struggling, not now, not in November and not at any stage.

Deputy Matt Carthy: Hear, hear.

Deputy Mary Lou McDonald: What the Government brings today is not a solution. It is kicking the can down the road. It is postponing the pain, not removing it. That is why we will oppose the Government motion today. That is why we have brought our own proposal, which would give certainty to workers who depend on their cars to get to work. It would give certainty to families struggling with household bills. It would give certainty to farming contractors, farmers, hauliers, tradespeople and small businesses. They need to know that the Government will not deliberately drive up petrol and diesel costs while international prices remain so high, not now and not in November.

Beyond these emergency measures, the Government of course must make practical progress towards clean, affordable energy and fuel sources. That is what will protect people from volatile international situations. It has to be said that Government's progress on this imperative has been literally at a snail's pace. The Tánaiste could have brought that certainty today but instead he has left the threat of higher prices hanging over people. This is an issue of political choice. Sinn Féin would make different choices. I want to be very clear. We support stopping the September and October increases but we will not support a plan that simply moves those increases to November, December, January and February. These taxes have to be kept off while fuel prices remain high. Budget 2027 must deliver meaningful cost-of-living relief for workers and families. People deserve that certainty too. They deserve a break and they deserve a Government that stands with them, not one that has to be dragged, by us, into doing the right thing.

Deputies: Hear, hear.

Deputy Pearse Doherty: This is an embarrassing climbdown from the Government, one we warned it about back in July. In its arrogance, the Government voted against a Sinn Féin amendment that would have seen us not having to recall the Dáil in emergency fashion. Fine Gael, the Independents and Fianna Fáil thought better and now we are here to clean up their mess. They thought they were going to get away with it but the public had a different mind and intention.

The reality is that what the Government is doing today is simply delaying the pain. The resolution it is asking us to vote for today is to support the increase on petrol and diesel come 14 October, 1 November, 1 December and again in January and February. As I said to the Minister before, there is no way I will support that. There is no way, when these prices remain sky high, that I could return to my constituents, look them in the face and say that I voted to make their lives harder because that is exactly what the Minister is doing.

The real impact of this motion here today is that, yes, we and the public have forced the Government into delaying the September and October increases, but it is six weeks of a reprieve. That is all it is and it is an example of the Government not understanding the pressure that people are under the length and breadth of this State. It is not just about petrol and diesel; it is about the constant rising prices everywhere: electricity, food, fuel, mortgages and interest rates. It is about all the pressure that is being put on people. What should be happening in this emergency sitting of the Dáil, if we had a Government that is worth its salt and understands the real pulse of the Irish people, is that the Government should be talking here about the proposals it is bringing forward to support individuals during the cost-of-living crisis. Instead, we have this farce of the Government asking us to vote for the date on which it can make life harder for people. Is it to be 14 October or 1 November? Well, we are having none of it.

There is an amendment before the Dáil from Sinn Féin. It is simple and clear: not a single cent in additional taxes on petrol and diesel while these prices remain high. It is the amendment the Government should have supported in July and, therefore, it would not have had to make this U-turn and call this Dáil into emergency session. Every TD should ask themselves the question, "How am I going to look my constituents in the face, when I go back to Waterford, Kerry or Donegal, if I vote for this resolution?". Let us be clear: come 14 October, what the Government is voting for is to increase petrol, diesel and home heating oil. It is absolutely shameful if that is the decision it takes today.

Deputies: Hear, hear.

An Ceann Comhairle: Did the Deputy move the amendment?

Deputy Pearse Doherty: I move amendment No. 1:

In page 1, in Schedule 2, inserted by paragraph (1), to delete from the row dated "14 October 2026" down to and including the row dated "1 May 2030" and substitute the following:

29 August 2026	€502.8 8	€502.8 8	€371.7 1	€371.8 5	€371.8 5	€0.0 0	€210.4 5	€172.1 4	€167.2 5	€79.1 7	€11.4 8
14 October 2026	€502.8 8	€502.8 8	€371.7 1	€371.8 5	€371.8 5	€0.0 0	€210.4 5	€172.1 4	€167.2 5	€79.1 7	€11.4 8

Deputy Holly Cairns: I join others in congratulating Senan Molony on his retirement.

This is a Government permanently stuck in reaction mode. A crisis happens, pressure builds, people protest and, eventually, the Government scrambles to put together an emergency response. This is not a cost-of-living strategy; it is a desperate approach from a Government with no vision and no ambition. People are under enormous pressure and that pressure has only ratcheted up over the summer. Electricity prices are soaring. Nearly 330,000 households are now behind on their electricity bills. Home heating oil is nearly 50% more expensive than

it was last year. Families are facing into one of the most expensive times of year. The back-to-school season means paying for uniforms, shoes, devices, transport, college fees and so-called voluntary contributions. That is on top of already extortionate rents, mortgages, childcare, groceries and energy bills. Yes, extending the fuel supports will help but it will not help enough.

The most frustrating thing is that this Government is in a position to do so much more. We could be back here today for longer than 60 minutes passing a comprehensive package of measures to make life affordable. We could introduce a targeted €400 energy credit for low- and middle-income households that need it the most and we could insulate families from these global price shocks and drive down energy costs in the long term. By introducing our Solar for All plan, approving plug-in solar and dramatically increasing grants, the Government could ensure that people permanently cut hundreds of euro from their electricity bills. These are all measures that the Social Democrats have consistently called on this Government to introduce and the Government has consistently ignored them. Instead, it is doing the bare minimum before the Dáil goes back into recess for another two weeks.

The problems facing this country are not going away. Our care and justice systems are failing children. There is tragedy on our roads. The majority of young people now believe they will never own their own home.

Families all over the country are still scrambling for school or bus places for their children. The healthcare staffing crisis is spiralling out of control and the Minister for Health is dismissing patient safety concerns of staff at CUH.

We all know the Government cannot control wars in the Middle East or international oil prices, but it can control how exposed we are when these shocks happen and it absolutely can control the crises facing us in housing, health, disability and social care. After years of record surpluses, there is no excuse for people to be left this vulnerable. We need a new approach.

Deputy Cian O'Callaghan: The Social Democrats are supporting the extension of the excise reduction. With petrol and diesel prices pushing back towards €2 a litre, loading on another hike next week would be too much for people to absorb. People are already put to the pin of their collar. They simply cannot keep up with constant price increases but, make no mistake, this extension is not a plan. What we are seeing is a Government that is lurching from crisis to crisis, coming up with emergency measure after emergency measure - measures that cost the taxpayer billions but do not last and do not fix anything.

The deferral of these excise duties will be adopted, and rightly so, but this Government has no answer for the day after this deferral ends. A Minister was on the airwaves last week stating that supports would stay in place until there was some levelling out and a return to normality. What if that does not come? What if these prices are the new normal? Is this Government seriously waiting for Donald Trump to come to his senses? Is this really its strategy? Suggesting that when Trump gets a drubbing in the midterm elections, he will have some sort of road to Damascus conversion is complete fantasy. This is Alice in Wonderland stuff.

The cost-of-living crisis goes far beyond the price at the pump. The ever-increasing cost of housing, groceries, childcare and electricity has made paying for the basics a nightmare in this

country. A constituent recently contacted me to share her struggles, a story that will sound too familiar to people all over the country. She said:

I'm one of the carers who is struggling on a social welfare payment because, unfortunately, my husband lost his sight. I'm not entitled to fuel allowance because I have adult children still living at home. I'm not even entitled to a primary medical certificate because blind people are exempt. I have to struggle day to day to keep the wolves from the door.

Today's extension represents another sticking plaster that is needed because of a chronic failure to deliver and will not address the root causes of this crisis. It is a cheque written straight into a market we do not control, with nothing durable left behind.

It does not need to be like this. There is another option. The Government could fix problems instead of throwing money at them. I will give one concrete example of how this would work. One million homes in this country are suitable for solar panels but fewer than 100,000 have them. A household with solar panels will cut roughly €450 from its electricity bill this year, next year, the year after and every year, no matter what chaos Donald Trump throws at us. The Social Democrats' Solar for All plan would double the grant to €3,600. It would restore the battery grant, put solar panels into the warmer homes scheme free of charge and increase supports for businesses as well as finally clear the way for plug-in solar. That is money that would be spent once and keep paying households back year after year.

The Social Democrats are voting for this measure because people need relief and they need it now, but the Government has lost control of the cost-of-living crisis and the public are paying for it. Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil are caught in a doom spiral of haphazard emergency measures that do nothing to address the root causes of the crisis, and unless that changes, we will be back here soon voting for yet another temporary fix. People need more than panicked emergency measures. We cannot control what Donald Trump will do, we cannot control what happens in the Strait of Hormuz and we cannot control the price of oil on the international markets, but what our Government can do is invest in solar and renewables, break our dependence on fossil fuels and drive down energy costs for households.

Deputy Ivana Bacik: I wish Senan Molony well on his retirement. He might even miss us all in here when he has departed.

The recall of the Dáil before the planned first-phase restoration of excise duty was inevitable.

It was predictable, and so the silly season August shadow-boxing was over before it began. It comes as no surprise to us that the sham fight was brought to an early close. We all know why we are here. It is because the Government parties of Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and the so-called Independents feared the return of mass protests this week. It was hard to see, indeed, how the Government could have allowed the first phase of these cuts to end in the same week that schools return and commuter traffic ramps up.

We understand why the decision has been taken but let us be clear that the decision to delay the restoration of the cuts in no way makes up for the Government's failure to protect PAYE workers from the cost-of-living crisis. The decision today does not undo how the Government sold out working people in favour of fast food chains in last year's budget, a decision that was, incredibly, cheer-leaded by other Opposition parties. The Government chose to use its tax base

to favour private interests rather than indexing personal tax rates, bands and credits. Many PAYE workers who get a pay rise this year are likely to be worse off than they were last year because of that decision. That is the reality of the Government's promise to make work pay.

As prices surge, hard-pressed families forgo the essentials because the Government has never invested adequately in universal public services, building decent homes, developing public infrastructure, tackling the climate crisis and tackling our over-reliance on fossil fuels. People in Ireland have been living with the consequences. It is no wonder the cost of car ownership has become a political football.

Not alone are energy costs high but Government decisions on the cost of groceries, housing, the inadequacy of public and active transport and the lack of a real right to remote work have unleashed acute financial pressures that households feel every day. It is not just households here. There is a universal refrain from tourists and returning emigrants who cannot believe the price of things in Ireland and are always surprised that they cannot get a train to or from Dublin Airport. How many people in Ireland are still far too dependent on fossil fuels - petrol and diesel - because the programme for Government slashed expenditure on sustainable transport in favour of "roads, baby, roads"? The Tánaiste spoke of a green transition but we do not see the evidence for it in the decisions taken in the budget.

The Labour Party is clear that continuing excise cuts indefinitely would be an inefficient, expensive and untargeted way to support struggling families. We know the Parliamentary Budget Office, the ESRI and others have shown that the benefits of this cut favour the better off. The reality is that the Government has failed to build any alternative or any better safety net for struggling families. We know low-income households spend a larger proportion of their income on energy, home heating oil, petrol and diesel, but this cut in excise will only be the same for them as for everyone else. Already, more than 500,000 households are in arrears on their electricity and gas bills. We know energy prices are surging despite the vote likely to happen today. While families struggle with their bills, the elephants in the room, literally, are the data centres that soak up what renewable energy capacity we do produce, leading to further price increases and threatening energy security. Let us be clear about that too.

While we will support the measure today as a measure that will support families, we recognise, and the Government also needs to recognise, that the budget provides an opportunity to do more to support hard-pressed families and to provide some sort of structured and developed plan to help households through not just this winter but future winters. What we need to see is a plan for targeted energy credits, as the Labour Party has sought. We need to see targeted support for home energy upgrades, to give people a real chance at the green transition the Tánaiste spoke of. We need to see real commitments to ramp up solar power capacity for the massive swing to EVs that is required so urgently. We need to see a commitment to tackle the cost-of-living crisis through the indexation of tax bands, again as the Labour Party has sought. We need to see a cap on the cost of childcare, set at €200 a month. We need to see real, tangible measures that would give working families real breathing space and real certainty to plan for the future.

Our political system was able to develop a Covid wage subsidy scheme overnight to save jobs and businesses. That system must be capable, with the right political decision-making, to ensure the targeting of relief for households most in need of a breather. A Government with the resources to spend billions on subsidising fossil fuels essentially should be able to afford to

address the systemic problems that are driving inequality and exacerbating the climate crisis. The Government has money aplenty but no vision.

The real problem with Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael is that there is no vision. They talk of prudence, but their annual budgets are a work of fiction. What we have seen are massive overruns being papered over with Supplementary Estimates, averaging €2 billion each year. The public finances are being treated like Fine Fáil's and Fine Gael's personal piggy bank, not as a tool for building a better society. They offer cash and short-term, stopgap solutions like this every time, without asking themselves what the problem is. The problem is a Government without a vision. It is without a vision to change this country and take the real and necessary climate action to tackle the climate crisis, and without a vision to tackle inequality and build a more equal society to support those in disadvantage, in energy arrears and in a housing crisis.

The Tánaiste is hearing from people around Ireland. He knows this. They cannot afford to cover the basics. They are facing high rents, high bills, high childcare costs and inadequate public transport, and he expects them to be grateful for another untargeted subsidy for fossil fuels that may barely keep pace with inflation.

We know that one in three older people living alone is at risk of poverty. We know that more than 95,000 children are growing up in a household that cannot afford everyday items. They deserve long-term, strategic policies to raise the social floor and tackle inequality. The Government has the money to do this. To date, however, we have seen no mission from this Government bigger than merely putting out fires and no vision other than buying the short-term support of interest groups and papering over cracks in the system.

The need to extend the excise cuts today is a symptom of a wider problem, namely, a failure by the Government to plan ahead and to develop the vision to tackle the real problems facing households across Ireland. We need to see a vision to tackle inequality, the cost-of-living crisis and the climate crisis. We are currently lacking that from the Government, and we need to see it.

This budget should be a wake-up call for the Government. The Labour Party will put forward an alternative vision in our alternative budget, on which we look forward to a fuller debate in the weeks and months ahead.

Deputy Paul Murphy: There is one lesson for me from today's farce, and it is that the Government is scared of the people. The only reason we are here today is that the Government is scared of widespread protests about the cost-of-living crisis. In response, we have a two-month stay of execution for petrol and diesel costs alone. It is completely inadequate when the cost-of-living crisis, driven by Trump's imperialist adventures in the Middle East, is worsening for working people right across the board.

What people want and need are certainty, security and stability. These could easily be provided. We have been calling for price controls for years. They are necessary and they need to be combined with universal electricity credits paid for by a levy on the data centres and investment in a rapid and just transition to a zero-carbon economy to get off of our addiction to and reliance on fossil fuels.

The only way to force the Government to act is the threat of protest and protest itself. There will be substantial protest. On Saturday, 19 September, the Affordable Ireland Campaign will

be mobilising significant numbers to say that, in one of the richest countries in the world, the upcoming budget must not make life harder for ordinary people but should instead protect people.

Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett: Fear of public outrage and protest has forced the Government to reconvene the Dáil. It is a pathetic admission by the Government that its policy has failed to provide any certainty or serious protection for ordinary people who are being hammered with the hikes in the costs of petrol and diesel. We can add to that electricity prices, gas prices, food prices and so many other things that are hammering people in their ability just to live from day to day.

What should be in front of the Dáil today is something that would actually protect people from those price hikes. Let us not forget that these have been caused by Donald Trump's warmongering. That the Government is going to welcome the man responsible for these price hikes to the country in a couple of weeks is laughable.

What should be in front of us are measures to control prices and address the profiteering. Protests caused the reconvening of the Dáil and protests are the way to get real relief for working people. That is why we will be mobilising for 19 September to put pressure on this Government to take serious action on the cost-of-living crisis that is blighting the lives of hundreds of thousands of working people, families and households in this country.

Deputy Roderic O'Gorman: The Dáil is sitting today to recognise the exceptional nature of the cost-of-living crisis being experienced by people all over our country. This crisis is driven by the increase in the cost of fossil fuels. Yet, in the measures being voted on today, there is not one proposal that will give long-term protection to Irish families from the international volatility in the cost of oil and gas. A huge investment of public money, €750 million, and not one cent of that will provide energy security in Irish homes.

Last April, the Government voted one-off payments for heat pumps and electric vehicles but did nothing about it. In his speech minutes ago, the Tánaiste talked big about the need to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels but in what we will vote on today, the Government does nothing about it. At what point is the Government going to move beyond soundbites and actually take meaningful steps? When will Irish households see the Government make solar panels more affordable, reduce the cost of an electric vehicle and deliver more retrofits for Irish homes? These are individual measures that would give households decades' worth of affordable energy and energy security. These are measures the Green Party has consistently fought for. When is the Government going to move beyond short-term thinking demonstrated by the measures we are voting on today and provide extra help so more Irish families can benefit from affordable and secure renewable energy?

Deputy Charles Ward: During the fuel protests, the public came out and told the Government what needed to be done. It knew this was coming, it did not listen and it left it to the eleventh hour, and here we are. The Government will have been in place for two years this November. What it has achieved is that we have record levels of homelessness, food inflation and the highest energy prices in Europe. The homelessness number is 17,500. In one year's time, it will be in excess of 20,000. At the same time, Ireland is now the most expensive country

in Europe for household electricity. Electricity bills have risen by between 75% and 85% since 2020, while the price of home heating oil has increased by up to 50% in the last six months alone. There has been a rise in food bills, with family grocery trolleys now costing €225 compared with €150 in 2020. People have been abandoned. There is no plan in place. There needs to be a change in direction. If there is none, we will be coming in here trying to fix the mess that has been created. The Government needs to start listening.

Deputy Ruth Coppinger: It is absolutely farcical to reconvene the Dáil for one hour over one aspect of one issue which the Government mistakenly thought would be okay, on which it has been proven wrong. It has not reconvened the Dáil to discuss back-to-school costs facing families this very week. They cannot wait for the budget in a month's time. One in four parents is already borrowing to put their kids into school this week. The Government has not reconvened the Dáil to discuss college fees pending next week, the highest in the EU, or for the 50,000 students who cannot find accommodation or the many in homeless accommodation.

I want to talk about electricity costs. They are still the highest in the EU, rising while data centres guzzled resources during the summer heatwave. Wait until people find out that up to €400 of their electricity costs is because the Government has thrown Ireland open to data centres. Civil servants have told the Government this. It has added up to €400 to electricity costs for householders. They have told the Government it is houses versus tech and the Government has chosen tech. The Government has an open-door policy for billion-dollar companies like the data centres and billionaires such as Mark Zuckerberg coming to buy a castle in Ireland. Donald Trump, of course, the architect of the cost-of-living crisis, will get the red carpet rolled out by this Government, with €20 million, I believe, to be paid for security for that. The Dáil will have no say over that either because it will happen before it is reconvened.

The Government underestimated the scale of this crisis. It is completely out of touch. We have the highest electricity costs, third level fees, childcare costs and very likely the highest healthcare costs in the EU as well. Most GPs have put their prices up to €70 over the summer. The Government is doing nothing about the cost-of-living crisis. One-off measures are not going to work.

Deputy Michael Collins: The time limit on this today is very unfair. We tabled constructive amendments, which will not be listened to today and are being kicked out, effectively.

1 o'clock

I have been talking to the farming sector, which is very seriously concerned because the previous cuts, which we supported, also included a rebate for farmers. As that is going to be kicked away this time, the farmers are going to get an awful kick back on this and are furious. They are talking about protesting. I am trying to keep the peace like we tried to before. The Government has forgotten the people out there - the farmers and the contractors - who are struggling at present anyway. The Government has turned its back on them. They are really angry over it this morning. They are asking the Tánaiste to look at this again. I think there is still enough time to do that. The Tánaiste said he is looking to give people certainty for September and October but what about November and December? What about the hundreds of thousands who cannot pay their electricity bills? They have no certainty. Putting up the

price of fuel again in the coming months will be a further hit. The Tánaiste also talked about electric vehicles and solar panels. People want to change but they cannot. A grant of €1,800 if you want to set up solar panels on your home to alleviate some of the cost of electricity is paltry in comparison to what is offered in other countries in Europe. We do not have enough time.

Deputy Peadar Tóibín: I also wish Senan Molony well and thank him for the important work he has done over the decades. Half a million families are in energy arrears. Nearly a third of the population cannot afford a staple of life, namely, energy. That is astounding in one of the richest countries in the world. The Government is one of the main drivers of fuel inflation. Over 50% of the price of a litre of petrol or diesel is made up of tax. The Government is tax-gouging the people of Ireland. For seven years, we in Aontú have said that locking people into an annual fuel tax increase irrespective of the price of fuel is morally wrong. Today, Simon Harris has, for the first time, used exactly the same language in his speech. Is this a potential U-turn on carbon tax? The logic of that sentence is to end the annual increase in carbon tax in this country. All of this is happening for the simple reason that the Government is afraid the people will protest on the streets during the EU Presidency. The Government is afraid of the people it is supposed to represent.

Deputy Paul Nicholas Gogarty: I send my best wishes to Senan Molony on his retirement. Here we are with another bandage to help hard-pressed citizens deal with rising energy costs arising from circumstances beyond their control. I am also happy to stick it on while also sticking it to Donald Trump but we really need to look at the bigger picture. The Tánaiste referred to our dependence on imported fossil fuels. As the late great Dolly Parton once sang:

It's a rich man's game no matter what they call it

And you spend your life puttin' money in his wallet

We are spending our Irish life putting money into rich countries' wallets. We are sending a fortune abroad when we have the potential to be net energy exporters. To be honest, there is more energy in a flashlight at Electric Picnic than in this tired Government. The national energy affordability task force is not fit for purpose. Electricity will not be affordable for decades unless we roll out the renewable grid, home insulation, solar power and electric vehicles and allow people to charge their EVs on domestic tariffs. We need to get real and start acting now. It is a wartime situation.

Deputy Richard O'Donoghue: The reason we are here today is that the Government, backed up by a couple of Independent Members who keep voting with it, is taking a euro in tax on every litre of fuel. What does that do? It is a circular economy. Many depend on fossil fuel vehicles, which make up about 80% of the vehicles in this country. These taxes put up the price of food, materials and transport for everyone. The only realistic thing to do is to cap the taxation on fuel. If fuel costs increase, we will pay that increase, but we should not be taxed on it. It is not the cost of fuel that is the problem at the moment. It is the cost of tax. When it goes up, everything goes up. The infrastructure is not here. People cannot afford to go to work but people want them to buy EVs. They cannot afford to put food on the table. When that

infrastructure is here, we will welcome it, but it is not here today. Cap the cost of fuel tax and we will pay the increased costs. That would save lives.

Deputy Ken O'Flynn: I thank the Tánaiste for the 21-page document. He talks a very good talk in that 21-page document but the reality is that his actions do not match it. This is a sticking plaster on a broken leg. That is what the Tánaiste is doing here today. That is effectively what it is. Some 500,000 in this country are in energy arrears. Some 18,000 are in homeless accommodation. Grocery prices are up by 4%. The Government is recalling the Dáil and the Tánaiste is telling us he is planning for the future. This is a six-week deferral. If the Tánaiste had any business acumen or understanding of how businesses are run, he would know that you cannot plan with just six weeks' certainty.

You need to have at least three, four or five months to run any household, to plan your business or to plan your costs.

Deputy Simon Harris: It is nine weeks.

Deputy Ken O'Flynn: It is impossible. Shame on you, Tánaiste, and shame on your Government.

Deputy Paul Lawless: Postponing a bad decision does not make it a good one. Families do not need a stay of execution for six weeks. They need certainty. In rural Ireland, fuel is not a luxury; it is a staple. It brings families to work, children to school and elderly people to appointments. The price of fuel does not stop in terms of the cost at the pump. Every lorry delivering to a supermarket carries the price of diesel onto the shelves. That is what the Government is doing. It is driving the cost of inflation across this country. We in Aontú warned the Government against the approach of locking Irish taxpayers into incremental increase year-on-year, multiple times per year, driving the cost of fuel irrespective of the cost of a barrel, irrespective of the cost of inflation and irrespective of the crisis that is happening in this country. That is why we are here today. The Government has had to recall the Dáil because of a poor taxation policy on fuel. It is time for the Tánaiste to wake up and to realise that locking the Irish taxpayer into incremental increase year-on-year, despite the reality on the ground, is wrong. It is time for him to wake up, to see that and to end this. He talks about certainty. Six weeks is not certainty for a business. Six weeks is not certainty for a family. I am asking him today not just for this temporary stay of execution but also to scrap the increases in relation to fuel during this extraordinarily difficult time for families while the cost of a barrel of fuel is rising exponentially. We can protect our environment without impoverishing the people who live in it. Climate policy should make greener alternatives affordable and not make ordinary lives unaffordable.

Deputy John Clendennen: I welcome the decision that is being taken here today. It is very much practical and necessary to bring the Dáil back during the summer recess. The Government had committed to monitoring and reviewing the cost of fuel and it has listened and responded to these ever-changing circumstances. In the past 120 days, we have seen fuel prices gradually fall but also rise sharply because of international volatility. The last thing

motorists need is a spike in prices next week. I think €2 per litre is very much that tipping point at the forecourts.

The European Commission recognises that Ireland's rate per litre is below the European average but that is lost in this Chamber, just as the €1 billion of support that has already been received is lost in this Chamber. We need to ensure that constituencies like my constituency of Offaly, where driving a car is not an optional extra but something people rely on, are supported. Despite the good progress that has been made, we have not got to the stage of investing in every high road and by-road with the likes of Local Link. This support is a necessity. It is something we need. I ask the Tánaiste to continue to support it as required while we see such volatility.

I would also like him to ensure we talk about more than just fuel over the coming weeks and months. There is a cost-of-living crisis. We need to support families, workers, farmers, businesses and hauliers when it comes to childcare, the back-to-school supports we have already introduced, and targeted energy and fuel bills. This should be done not just by supporting subsidies but also by ensuring we invest in the future through the likes of retrofit schemes, which are considered best in class in the EU. We see almost €1 billion per year of investment by the likes of the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, SEAI, to ensure we are making those investments. I encourage the Tánaiste to look at investing appropriately in onshore and offshore renewable energy to ensure we are building energy independence, we are less reliant on international markets and we are moving towards reducing our need for fossil fuels.

I very much welcome this important initiative. We are giving certainty to people over the coming weeks. I ask the Tánaiste to consider some means of dynamic pricing so that rather than having to debate this every couple of months here in the Chamber, when prices rise we see the supports, but when we see them fall those supports are reduced. In the last 90 days, we have seen as much of a reduction as we have seen an increase.

Deputy Brian Brennan: I warmly welcome today's financial resolution. It is very clear that we are in a completely different situation from the one we were in back in July. Fuel costs are continuing to increase right across the board and there is no sign of stability in the Middle East.

Over the past two months, I have met many of my constituents, including Breen Transport in Ferns and bus and taxi companies in Gorey and Arklow. In my rural constituency, it is obvious that the agricultural sector is hugely concerned about fuel costs. I have also met ordinary commuters who get up for work every morning and this is a huge concern for many of them.

I ask for two things. The first is that these supports remain under review, and there must be no deadline on that. We simply do not know what is around the corner geopolitically. Second, with winter around the corner, I ask that the Government address home heating oil in the budget and find a way to offer support. Pensioners are genuinely scared of what will happen this winter. These are people who have paid their taxes and made huge contributions to their communities in our towns and villages. Their voices may not be as loud as others but our pensioners deserve to be heard.

We need a solution. While it may not be in Ukraine or on the Strait of Hormuz, as sure as night follows day, we will be back here again facing another geopolitical situation where fuel

costs increase yet again. Why not look at solar energy and continue the roll-out of solar panels? They should be on every house, industrial premises, school and shed in Ireland. Tonight, not one bulb will be lit using energy from the Irish Sea. A planning application for 53 wind turbines off the coast of Arklow is tied up in the planning process. It must be expedited. We need these turbines because we need to take control of our own energy. We are too dependent on imported fossil fuels.

Deputy Michael Healy-Rae: I welcome the passing of this resolution in a very special way. At this time, we need to continue these supports as they are very important. If we look at the bigger picture and the future fuel needs of the country, the fact is that an awful lot of activity, including agricultural activity, is based in rural areas. So much needs to be moved around this island every day by large trucks and we do not have train or bus services on every road and in every town in the country. We have to look at the taxation of fuel because we pay too much tax and excise on the fuel that is used. It is aspirational for people to say that by 2030 or 2035, we will have removed our reliance on fossil fuels. That is not true. We will not be able to do that in as speedy a fashion as we might like. In future budgets, we have to recognise that people are paying too much tax and excise on the fuel that is required and which they need every day.

Deputy Gillian Toole: Comhghairdeas Senan agus a Aire. I support the actions today. They are necessary in these uncertain times and they must be kept under review, as has been said previously. "Waste not, want not" are wise words from our treasured older people.

On the issue of vision, or lack thereof, Deputy Heneghan has been persistent in pursuing plug-in solar, which is not too far away. I say this in case there is any doubt about the ambition and vision of those on this side of the House.

Taxation is essential for the provision of public services but it must be appropriate, fair and used effectively. Opportunities must be taken and I have no doubt that from today onwards, they will be. The teams of people spending these taxes must be accountable, committed, empowered, resourced, trained and responsible. They and their skills and experience must be valued, not undermined by unnecessary outsourcing of consultation. We must remember Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

There need not be duplication either. In my limited experience as a small business owner and daughter of a family farmer, duplication causes dilution of funds. We do not have the luxury of dilution or waste.

An Ceann Comhairle: Thank you, Deputy Toole.

Deputy Gillian Toole: This country must be run like a family home, a community group or a small business.

An Ceann Comhairle: Time is up, Deputy. Thank you.

Deputy Gillian Toole: Múineann gá seift.

Minister of State at the Department of Finance (Deputy Robert Troy): This financial resolution provides for an extension of the current temporary excise rate reductions on auto diesel and petrol from 31 August until 31 October 2026. This means the rates of mineral oil tax will remain reduced, on a VAT-inclusive basis, by 30 cent per litre for auto diesel and 25 cent per litre for petrol until the end of October. There has been a temporary reduction to the excise rate applied to marked gas oil and we are also acting to further extend the period of this reduction. The financial resolution introduces a revised schedule for the unwinding of these temporary measures on a graduated basis from 1 November onwards.

Listening to some of the contributions from across the floor, people would be forgiven for thinking this involved the introduction of new taxes, not an unwinding of temporary measures that were introduced. As Deputies are all aware, we are living through a period of exceptional uncertainty and exceptional measures have been taken, not just by this Government but by governments across the world in response to heightened fuel prices. Let us look at prices across Europe today. The price of a litre of petrol in Denmark is €2.45, in the Netherlands it is €2.35, in Germany it is €2.25, in Finland it is €2.18 and in France it is €2.07. Those prices are all a lot higher than the price here, because of what we in the Government have been able to do to try to keep the cost below €2.

As elected public representatives, we need to respond when and where necessary while ensuring we act in a way that is fiscally responsible. The Government recognises the continued financial pressures facing households and businesses arising from heightened fuel prices as a result of the conflict in the Middle East. As a Government, we stated at the outset of the conflict that we would monitor the situation closely and reserve the right to adjust our response as required, and that is what we have done. Decisions have been taken in real time with the data and information we have to hand, not based on predictions.

Despite what the Opposition may suggest or try to insinuate, this Government has a strong and unwavering record of supporting our citizens through times of crisis and uncertainty. We did so in response to Brexit, throughout the Covid pandemic and following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and we will continue to do so as we navigate the ongoing and ever-changing situation in the Middle East. As recent developments highlight, the situation remains fluid. The wholesale price of oil and, importantly, of refined fuels, like petrol and diesel, continues to fluctuate and we can see this reflected at the pumps. As I have previously said, there will no doubt be further ebbs and flows before a new equilibrium is reached in global oil markets. Although there has been a slight easing in recent days, oil prices remain elevated and the situation remains highly uncertain. That is why we must continue to be flexible in our response.

The Government will continue to support people when they need it, but that support must be delivered in a way that is prudent, sustainable and responsible. It is precisely because of the careful management of our economy by the Government and successive Ministers for Finance that we have the fiscal breathing room to intervene when crises arise and to protect households from the worst of the impact. Shielding people from the worst effects of inflation and external economic shocks requires strong public finances. It is prudent economic management that gives the Government the capacity to step in when necessary, not the Opposition's continuous calls for increasing spending from what those Members appear to believe is a bottomless pot of money. The question for the Opposition is a simple one. How big would the fiscal breathing

room this Government has created be if we had accepted the continuous and never-ending calls they made for additional spending?

Our responsibility is not exclusively to respond to the pressures of today but to ensure we retain the capacity to respond to the crises and challenges of tomorrow. Solid budgetary management in recent years means we have the capacity to respond in a timely way to help with this energy price shock, but this comes at a significant cost to the Exchequer. The estimated cost to the Exchequer from 1 September until the final restoration on 28 February 2027 as regards the extension of the temporary changes is approximately €407 million.

This measure is obviously being introduced today but, as previous speakers, including the Tánaiste, have said, as we frame the budget, which will be introduced in a number of weeks, we are determined that it will make decisive interventions that will further assist people with the cost of living, reward work, reduce costs and protect the economy.

An Ceann Comhairle: That concludes the debate. As 60 minutes have elapsed, I must put the question on amendment No. 1.

Amendment put:

The Dáil divided: Tá, 60; Níl, 93; Staon, 0.		
Tá	Níl	Staon
Ahern, Ciarán.	Aird, William.	
Bacik, Ivana.	Ardagh, Catherine.	
Bennett, Cathy.	Boland, Grace.	
Boyd Barrett, Richard.	Brabazon, Tom.	
Brady, John.	Brennan, Brian.	
Buckley, Pat.	Brennan, Shay.	
Byrne, Joanna.	Brophy, Colm.	
Carthy, Matt.	Browne, James.	
Clarke, Sorca.	Burke, Colm.	
Collins, Michael.	Burke, Peter.	
Conway-Walsh, Rose.	Butler, Mary.	
Coppinger, Ruth.	Butterly, Paula.	
Cronin, Réada.	Buttimer, Jerry.	
Crowe, Seán.	Byrne, Thomas.	
Cullinane, David.	Cahill, Michael.	
Daly, Pa.	Cairns, Holly.	
Devine, Máire.	Callaghan, Catherine.	
Doherty, Pearse.	Calleary, Dara.	
Donnelly, Paul.	Canney, Seán.	
Ellis, Dessie.	Carrigy, Micheál.	
Farrell, Mairéad.	Carroll MacNeill, Jennifer.	
Fitzmaurice, Michael.	Chambers, Jack.	
Gogarty, Paul Nicholas.	Cleere, Peter 'Chap'.	
Gould, Thomas.	Clendennen, John.	
Graves, Ann.	Connolly, John.	
Guirke, Johnny.	Cooney, Joe.	
Healy-Rae, Danny.	Crowe, Cathal.	

Kelly, Alan.	Cummins, Jen.	
Kenny, Eoghan.	Cummins, John.	
Kenny, Martin.	Currie, Emer.	
Kerrane, Claire.	Daly, Martin.	
Lawless, Paul.	Dempsey, Aisling.	
Mac Lochlainn, Pádraig.	Devlin, Cormac.	
McDonald, Mary Lou.	Dillon, Alan.	
McGettigan, Donna.	Dolan, Albert.	
McGrath, Mattie.	Dooley, Timmy.	
McGuinness, Conor D.	Ennis, Daniel.	
Mitchell, Denise.	Farrelly, Aidan.	
Murphy, Paul.	Feighan, Frankie.	
Mythen, Johnny.	Fleming, Sean.	
Newsome Drennan, Natasha.	Foley, Norma.	
Ní Raghallaigh, Shónagh.	Gannon, Gary.	
Nolan, Carol.	Geoghegan, James.	
O'Donoghue, Richard.	Gibney, Sinéad.	
O'Donoghue, Robert.	Grealish, Noel.	
O'Flynn, Ken.	Harkin, Marian.	
O'Hara, Louis.	Harris, Simon.	
O'Reilly, Louise.	Hayes, Eoin.	
O'Rourke, Darren.	Healy-Rae, Michael.	
Ó Laoghaire, Donnchadh.	Hearne, Rory.	
Ó Murchú, Ruairí.	Heneghan, Barry.	
Ó Súilleabháin, Fionntán.	Heydon, Martin.	
Quinlivan, Maurice.	Higgins, Emer.	
Sheehan, Conor.	Keogh, Keira.	
Sherlock, Marie.	Kyne, Seán.	
Smith, Duncan.	Lahart, John.	
Tóibín, Peadar.	Lawless, James.	
Wall, Mark.	Lowry, Michael.	
Ward, Charles.	Martin, Micheál.	
Ward, Mark.	McAuliffe, Paul.	
	McCarthy, Noel.	
	McConalogue, Charlie.	
	McCormack, Tony.	
	McEntee, Helen.	
	McGrath, Séamus.	
	McGreehan, Erin.	
	Moynihan, Aindrias.	
	Moynihan, Michael.	
	Moynihan, Shane.	
	Murnane O'Connor, Jennifer.	
	Naughton, Hildegard.	
	Neville, Joe.	
	O'Callaghan, Cian.	
	O'Connell, Maeve.	
	O'Connor, James.	

	O'Dea, Willie.	
	O'Donnell, Kieran.	
	O'Gorman, Roderic.	
	O'Meara, Ryan.	
	O'Sullivan, Christopher.	
	O'Sullivan, Pádraig.	
	Ó Cearúil, Naoise.	
	Ó Muirí, Naoise.	
	Rice, Pádraig.	
	Richmond, Neale.	
	Roche, Peter.	
	Smith, Brendan.	
	Smyth, Niamh.	
	Timmins, Edward.	
	Toole, Gillian.	
	Troy, Robert.	
	Ward, Barry.	
	Whitmore, Jennifer.	

Tellers: Tá, Deputies Pádraig Mac Lochlainn and Pearse Doherty; Níl, Deputies Mary Butler and Emer Currie.

Amendment declared lost.

Question put: "That amendment No. 2 set down to the motion for Financial Resolution is hereby negatived and that the motion for the Financial Resolution is hereby agreed to."

The Dáil divided: Tá, 104; Níl, 49; Staon, 0.		
Tá	Níl	Staon
Ahern, Ciarán.	Bennett, Cathy.	
Aird, William.	Boyd Barrett, Richard.	
Ardagh, Catherine.	Brady, John.	
Bacik, Ivana.	Buckley, Pat.	
Boland, Grace.	Byrne, Joanna.	
Brabazon, Tom.	Carthy, Matt.	
Brennan, Brian.	Clarke, Sorca.	
Brennan, Shay.	Collins, Michael.	
Brophy, Colm.	Conway-Walsh, Rose.	
Browne, James.	Coppinger, Ruth.	
Burke, Colm.	Cronin, Réada.	
Burke, Peter.	Crowe, Seán.	
Butler, Mary.	Cullinane, David.	
Butterly, Paula.	Daly, Pa.	
Buttimer, Jerry.	Devine, Máire.	
Byrne, Thomas.	Doherty, Pearse.	
Cahill, Michael.	Donnelly, Paul.	
Cairns, Holly.	Ellis, Dessie.	
Callaghan, Catherine.	Farrell, Mairéad.	
Calleary, Dara.	Fitzmaurice, Michael.	

Canney, Seán.	Gould, Thomas.	
Carrigy, Micheál.	Graves, Ann.	
Carroll MacNeill, Jennifer.	Guirke, Johnny.	
Chambers, Jack.	Healy-Rae, Danny.	
Cleere, Peter 'Chap'.	Kenny, Martin.	
Clendennen, John.	Kerrane, Claire.	
Connolly, John.	Lawless, Paul.	
Cooney, Joe.	Mac Lochlainn, Pádraig.	
Crowe, Cathal.	McDonald, Mary Lou.	
Cummins, Jen.	McGettigan, Donna.	
Cummins, John.	McGuinness, Conor D.	
Currie, Emer.	Mitchell, Denise.	
Daly, Martin.	Murphy, Paul.	
Dempsey, Aisling.	Mythen, Johnny.	
Devlin, Cormac.	Newsome Drennan, Natasha.	
Dillon, Alan.	Ní Raghallaigh, Shónagh.	
Dolan, Albert.	Nolan, Carol.	
Dooley, Timmy.	O'Donoghue, Richard.	
Ennis, Daniel.	O'Flynn, Ken.	
Farrelly, Aidan.	O'Hara, Louis.	
Feighan, Frankie.	O'Reilly, Louise.	
Fleming, Sean.	O'Rourke, Darren.	
Foley, Norma.	Ó Laoghaire, Donnchadh.	
Gannon, Gary.	Ó Murchú, Ruairí.	
Geoghegan, James.	Ó Súilleabháin, Fionntán.	
Gibney, Sinéad.	Quinlivan, Maurice.	
Gogarty, Paul Nicholas.	Tóibín, Peadar.	
Grealish, Noel.	Ward, Charles.	
Harkin, Marian.	Ward, Mark.	
Harris, Simon.		
Hayes, Eoin.		
Healy-Rae, Michael.		
Hearne, Rory.		
Heneghan, Barry.		
Heydon, Martin.		
Higgins, Emer.		
Kelly, Alan.		
Kenny, Eoghan.		
Keogh, Keira.		
Kyne, Seán.		
Lahart, John.		
Lawless, James.		
Lowry, Michael.		
Martin, Micheál.		
McAuliffe, Paul.		
McCarthy, Noel.		
McConalogue, Charlie.		
McCormack, Tony.		

McEntee, Helen.		
McGrath, Mattie.		
McGrath, Séamus.		
McGreehan, Erin.		
Moynihan, Aindrias.		
Moynihan, Michael.		
Moynihan, Shane.		
Murnane O'Connor, Jennifer.		
Naughton, Hildegard.		
Neville, Joe.		
O'Callaghan, Cian.		
O'Connell, Maeve.		
O'Connor, James.		
O'Dea, Willie.		
O'Donnell, Kieran.		
O'Donoghue, Robert.		
O'Gorman, Roderic.		
O'Meara, Ryan.		
O'Sullivan, Christopher.		
O'Sullivan, Pádraig.		
Ó Cearúil, Naoise.		
Ó Muirí, Naoise.		
Rice, Pádraig.		
Richmond, Neale.		
Roche, Peter.		
Sheehan, Conor.		
Sherlock, Marie.		
Smith, Brendan.		
Smith, Duncan.		
Smyth, Niamh.		
Timmins, Edward.		
Toole, Gillian.		
Troy, Robert.		
Wall, Mark.		
Ward, Barry.		
Whitmore, Jennifer.		

Tellers: Tá, Deputies Mary Butler and Emer Currie; Níl, Deputies Pádraig Mac Lochlainn and Michael Collins.

Question declared carried.

Cuireadh an Dáil ar athló ar 1.41 p.m. go dtí 2 p.m., Dé Céadaoin, an 16 Meán Fómhair 2026.

The Dáil adjourned at 1.41 p.m. until 2 p.m. on Wednesday, 16 September 2026.