

## **Motion re Government Response to Storm Éowyn**

### **That Dáil Éireann:**

commends the voluntary and community efforts of everyone who stepped up to assist individuals, families, communities, businesses, sporting groups and voluntary organisations following the havoc caused by Storm Éowyn;

recognises the vital communication role played by local, community and regional radio stations;

recognises the outstanding workers from local authorities, the Electricity Supply Board (ESB), Úisce Éireann and phone companies who have been out day and night in miserable and dangerous conditions to restore essential services;

applauds the communities that have stood together, amid the most difficult circumstances, who rallied together by opening their homes, community facilities and ensured help was provided;

acknowledges the difficulties businesses, community and sporting groups continue to face, including significant financial hardship and the prospect of permanent closure;

### **notes:**

—the lack of an effective co-ordinated emergency plan to deal with the aftermath of Storm Éowyn;

—the delayed response of Government to quickly intervene, and the failure to provide any supports to local businesses, sports and community groups left devastated by the storm;

—the fact that many businesses, schools, and homes remained without power for unacceptable lengths of time;

—the failure of ESB Networks to forward plan by undertaking action to improve their response to unplanned power outages as has been repeatedly directed by the energy regulator since 2021;

—the record-breaking profits that electricity generating companies have made in recent years which they have been allowed to keep in full, combined with ESB's refusal to make appropriate use of their €898 million profit last year in response to this national crisis as well as their public comments that the costs of repairing the electricity network may be borne by customers through increased electricity bills; and

—Úisce Eireann's lack of forward planning that left key water infrastructure without back-up generation capacity in the aftermath of Storm Éowyn; and

### **calls on the Government to:**

—provide an adequate level of Government funding to aid and assist businesses, community groups, voluntary organisations and sporting clubs that have been damaged by the storm;

—bring forward the reinstatement of a 9 per cent Value-Added Tax (VAT) rate for the hospitality sector;

—ensure that the ESB provide a goodwill payment to customers determined by the length of time they were without power, and that they suspend the Public Service Obligation levy and standing charges for those without power for that period; and

—expand the Humanitarian Assistance Scheme to include businesses, sporting clubs, voluntary organisations and community groups who have been impacted by the storm as it was after Storm Babet.