

12th April 2022

Mr. Damien English TD
Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
23 Kildare Street
Dublin 2
D02 TD30

Dear Minister,

I refer to your department's recently launched consultation process seeking the views of interested parties on matters that arise from the introduction of the Industrial Relations (Provisions in Respect of Pension Entitlements of Retired Workers) Bill 2021. We understand that this Bill will move to committee stage in the Dáil later in the year and the responses received as part of the consultation process will be considered by government in that context.

Congress has given detailed and careful consideration to the provisions of this Bill. We understand that its main purpose is to expand and extend the right of retired workers to process disputes related to their occupational pensions through the industrial relations machinery of the state. The Bill further proposes amending the Industrial Relations Act 1990 to include retired workers as a party to a trade dispute with provision that, organisations designated by the Minister as representative of retired workers, can engage in collective bargaining without the requirement to hold a negotiation licence.

Congress is broadly supportive of the principles enshrined in this Bill. In that connection we believe that should the Government facilitate its passage through the Oireachtas, it is incumbent on the Government to table the necessary amendments to the Industrial Relations Act 1990 and other relevant Trade Union Acts, to ensure that the proposed extended rights, including collective bargaining rights, to be afforded to retired workers and their organisations, will be provided to all workers and their licensed trade unions.

It would seem incongruous with the intent of the Bill if a retired worker could have greater access to the state's dispute resolution machinery than an employed worker. We would be obliged if you could regard this correspondence as the Congress submission to the consultation process.

Yours sincerely



Patricia King
General Secretary

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