Draft email that citizens/residents/community groups can send to their local TD or Minister for Housing

Dear [Deputy/Minister/Senator Name],

My name is [__] and I live in your constituency at [neighbourhood name]. I am contacting you in relation to the Planning and Development Bill 2023, which is currently before the Oireachtas.

If passed in its current form, Part 9 of the bill, which relates to access to the judicial review process in planning and environmental matters, will make it more difficult and costly for citizens, community and environmental groups and residents' associations to challenge planning decisions which affect their communities and the environment. I am particularly concerned by plans to introduce a requirement that a list of the names and addresses of those who vote in favour of bringing judicial proceedings is submitted in court documents – this can only be designed to produce a chilling effect and scare local groups off potential challenges.

The bill will also restrict environmental NGOs from taking action unless they fulfil arbitrary preconditions such as being a company with ten or more members.

Community, environmental and residents' groups play a vital role in helping make their neighbourhood a better place to live. Amid a worsening climate crisis, we should be empowered to fight for clean, healthy, and liveable communities; and to hold the government to account when they make decisions which aren't in accordance with the law.

I ask that you, as my local representative, call on the Government and the Minister for Housing to immediately reverse the restrictions proposed in Part 9 of the Bill and prevent any further erosion of our fundamental right as citizens to hold government to account on planning and environmental decision making.

Yours sincerely,