

Manifesto



FIANNA FÁIL
AN PÁIRTÍ POBLACHTÁNACH

**Brian
Ó DOMHNAILL**

SENATOR BRIAN Ó DOMHNAILL

PERSONAL MANIFESTO

“FIGHTING FOR YOUR FUTURE”



NOVEMBER 2011

INTRODUCTION

A chara,

The vote we cast in the bye-election is vital for the future of Donegal and Ireland.

The problems faced by our country are too serious for politics as usual.

I believe that we need politicians who are focused on trying to overcome these problems not ones who are focused on trying to exploit them. That's why I have published this personal manifesto.

The people of Donegal South West need someone who will fight for our futures. We need someone who puts them first, then country, then party. We need someone who can persuade, influence and make the case for Donegal South West at the highest levels.

I believe that working with the people of Donegal South West, we can lead a recovery in the constituency.

This constituency needs a recovery plan based on reality – not the empty and unaffordable policies put forward by others.

Because I believe we must act to restore the national finances before we can again see jobs and growth I am very clearly saying I will support the proposed multi-year budget plan. This means I will have to support many unpopular choices – but I will not join the other candidates in pretending that these choices can be avoided.

However, even in the hardest of times there are still opportunities to influence decisions in favour of Donegal. When this recession came we were still suffering from the historical impact of the troubles on border counties. Donegal has many arguments to support its case for priority and I will work tirelessly to bring these arguments to every level of government.

This document is my personal manifesto. It sets out my priorities if I'm elected. Each key element of it is achievable within the likely spending elements of the 4-year budget. I believe that we must have ambition and vision for the future of Donegal.

Mine is a positive agenda which sees Donegal as a great county which can achieve a lot if it gets the priority it deserves.

Is mise le meas

Brian Ó Domhnaill

1. SECURING JOBS FOR DONEGAL SOUTH WEST

Job creation will be my central focus. If elected I will:

- Work closely with my Fianna Fáil colleagues to influence policy so as to attract investment into the county in conjunction with IDA which aims to create 100,000 jobs through FDI up to 2014
- I will actively insist that the IDA meet the agreed target of 50% of projects to go to less-developed areas
- Meet with the head of Enterprise Ireland to explore a targeted development plan for Donegal companies within growth sectors
- Work to ensure that Harvest 2020 is implemented so the agri-food sector, which accounts for 90% of agricultural output, thrives in Donegal
- Continue working through Údarás to safeguard over 2000 jobs and nearly 500 businesses in the county – and to argue for an expanded role for the Údarás
- Lobby for Donegal VEC and Letterkenny Institute of Technology in providing expanded training and education in the key areas for growth such as renewables
- Help local entrepreneurs and SMEs to take up existing business grants and supports available by Donegal businesses including making representations to the Credit Review office on behalf of viable businesses denied credit
- Support moves to reduce the regulatory burden on small businesses – the engine of job growth in this economy
- Support efforts to exploit the rise in UK VAT rates and work with groups to persuade people to shop in their local communities – which is potentially worth millions to Donegal's economy.

2. SECURING HEALTH SERVICES FOR DONEGAL SOUTH WEST

The people of Donegal South West deserve excellent health services that deliver excellent health outcomes. If elected, my priorities will be:

- That the A+E in Letterkenny hospital is completed by June 2011
- That the Health Service Executive keeps the hospice inpatient unit in Letterkenny open. The suggestion of closure is without foundation and caused regrettable concern for families and patients in the county
- Work to secure funding from the Board of the HSE for primary care centres in Lifford and Glenties
- Continue working to ensure that follow-up mammography services will be put in place at Sligo General for breast cancer patients who have finished treatment.
- Continue to work with Northern Irish health authorities to ensure Donegal patients will be able to access radiotherapy services at Altnagelvin in Derry when complete.

3. SECURING EDUCATION FOR DONEGAL SOUTH WEST

In future, education and continuous learning will become Ireland's key competitive advantage. Every Irish citizen deserves an education that empowers them to reach their potential. If elected, I will:

- Strongly oppose the McCarthy recommendations regarding small schools
- Since 2002, almost €130 million has now been invested in major school building and modernisation projects in County Donegal. €10 million has been invested in the county in this year alone
- Establish a forum for industry interaction with Letterkenny IT to increase industry collaboration in research which can lead to jobs, revenue for ITs and invaluable business experience for students and researchers
- Within the budget, fight for school-building grants for primary and secondary schools in Donegal South West
- Argue for Donegal to fully benefit from the expansion in training places.

4. SECURING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR FARMERS & FISHERMEN

Irish agriculture and fishing are facing huge challenges. With the correct support, there is a huge opportunity to increase the value of primary output in the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sector by €1.5billion by 2020. If elected, I will:

- Support a strong national stance in negotiations on CAP post 2013 ensuring a continuation of the direct payments system that is so fundamental to farmers incomes
- Argue for payments under the Disadvantaged Areas Scheme and the Agri Environment Options Scheme to be maintained at the same levels
- Work with Pat The Cope Gallagher and Minister Sean Connick to ensure that Donegal fishermen are properly represented and fishing opportunities are protected under the CFP review
- Make the case for viable farmers and fishermen who are denied credit by banks through working with both the Credit Review Office and the Credit Supply Clearing Group.

5. SECURING INFRASTRUCTURE TO CONNECT DONEGAL SOUTH WEST

Ensuring the county is connected and accessible is essential for economic and social growth. If elected, I will:

- Make the case for continued investment in the county's infrastructure. In February, the Government's allocation to Donegal's national and non-national roads topped €38million-an increase of €2million on the 2009 figure with some €12million being approved for various stretches of the N56 from Mountcharles to Inver and Glenties to Dungloe
- Work with my Ministerial colleagues to ensure that the North/South Council of Ministers goes ahead with the planned upgrade on the Aughnacloy/A5 road for which the Government made provision for €9million in 2010.
- Work with the NRA and Minister for Transport Noel Dempsey to ensure that the Atlantic Corridor works are progressed and that PPPs are used efficiently and provide value for money for the taxpayer
- Continue to support innovative public transport solutions such as the Bus Éireann/Translink service to Dublin Airport
- Seek to secure the PSO for Donegal Airport and support the authority in attracting new airlines and routes.

6. SECURING OUR COMMUNITIES

Donegal's communities are one of its greatest strengths. Government must acknowledge their importance to the county and support groups that contribute positively to these communities. If elected, I will:

- Work with Joint Policing Bodies and communities to promptly address law and order issues throughout the constituency to ensure people feel safe in their homes
- Help families in mortgage arrears by reporting mortgage providers who don't conform with the code of conduct for mortgage arrears
- Ensure that Donegal communities receive a fair share of Fáilte Ireland's €3.6 million business development programme to build local economies
- Help local committees where possible in securing funding and promoting their festivals
- Fight to ensure that sports and cultural groups in the county secure as close as possible to their 2010 allocation of €29 million and €5 million respectively
- Support the valuable work for groups that address issues of isolation, depression and social exclusion through counselling and support
- Ensure that the islands have strong representation in Government so these communities can thrive and maintain their place as a unique part of Irish culture
- Continue to promote the Government's 20 year strategy that will secure the future of the Irish language and the Gaeltacht.

MY PERSONAL COMMITMENT

These are my personal commitments to you as a constituent of Donegal South West. I will fight your corner on these issues and others throughout my political career. I recognise as an elected national representative I have a duty to do what's best for all of Ireland. I believe our political system needs to be fundamentally changed so it can serve the Irish people in a rapidly changing world.

As politicians, we must set an example particularly as people face into a tough budget and austerity plan. If elected, I will:

- Maintain current levels of constituency clinics in Donegal South West
- Regularly publish in full on my website my vouched expenses
- Publish an annual report on my work locally and nationally
- Maintain a high attendance in the Dáil as a matter of principle
- Support reform to make the Dáil's work more transparent and accessible – including extra sitting days focused on improving legislation and scrutiny of public bodies.

SENATOR BRIAN Ó DOMHNAILL

OIFIG DÁIL CHEANTAIR,

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