

HOUSE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

TESTIMONY OF WILLIAM G. KINNEY

JUNE 6, 2017

Thank you, Chairman Landis, Vice Chair Hagan, Ranking Minority Member O'Brien, and members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee. My name is William Kinney and I am the owner and President of Summit Petroleum, Inc., an Ohio oil and gas producer that also does work plugging idle and orphan wells. I am before you today to discuss Ohio's current idle and orphan well situation and my viewpoints on Ohio orphan well plugging program.

Ohio has a rich oil and gas producing history. The first oil and gas well was drilled in Mecca Township, Trumbull County (northeast of the City of Warren) in 1859. From there, Ohio experienced an "oil rush" in the 1880's. Between 1895 and 1903, Ohio was the leading producer of crude oil in the country (surpassing at the time both Texas and Oklahoma). A majority of Ohio's historic production can be classified as "pre-regulatory production", that is production before the implementation of modernized Ohio oil and gas law, which began in 1965.

Today, northeastern Ohio is feeling the impacts of these wells. These pre-regulatory wells now lie "idle and orphaned". This could mean that the well may be plugged with the best industry practices at the time (IE – plugged using a tree trunk) and not current industry best practices. This could also mean that the well has no owner of record, who would be responsible to plug the well, and built to a turn of the century well construction standard.

Idle and orphan oil and gas wells are an authentic environmental issue. I have worked in the suburbs of Cleveland and the corn fields of western Ohio. Let me assure you, the landowners who stumble upon these wells expect prompt and effective resolution. It would behoove the industry, the state, and its citizens to plug these wells using today's best practices in a manner to address the issue today and eradicate the issue for the future.

My expertise lies with the plugging of these wells. Again, I have plugged idle and orphan wells in coordination with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR). Additionally, as an oil and gas producer, I have paid a portion of my taxes to go towards the plugging of these wells. It is important to note that the industry is currently paying into this idle and orphan well fund and, as both a taxpayer and an oil and gas producer, adequate funding in this program is important to address the issue of plugging these wells.

For all of these reasons, I am here today as a proponent for Rep. Thompson's House Bill 225. The bill's goal is to streamline the idle and orphan well process while focusing on the actual plugging of these wells. Generally speaking, I would state that in my experiences with the idle and orphan well program, the focus needs to revolve around the efficient and effective process of plugging these wells. House Bill 225 would achieve this general goal.

Thank you once again, Chairman Landis and members of the committee, for allowing me to testify before you today. I will now make myself available for any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,

William G. Kinney
President
Summit Petroleum, Inc.
9345 Ravenna Road, Unit A
Twinsburg, OH 44087
Ph: (330) 487-5494
Fax: (330) 963-7245