



*Working together for Ohio farmers to advance
agriculture and strengthen our communities.*

**House Natural Resources Committee
SB 219 Interested Party Testimony
Evan Calliccoat, Director of State Policy
March 18, 2026**

Chair Robb Blasdel, Vice Chair Fischer, Ranking Member Rogers, and the honorable members of the House Natural Resources Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide interested party testimony on SB 219. My name is Evan Calliccoat, and I serve as the Director of State Policy for the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation. SB 219 makes several updates to Ohio's oil and gas laws, but I will limit my comments to three of the provisions in the bill

We appreciate the removal of language from the as-introduced version that would have made road use maintenance agreements, or RUMAs, voluntary through the sub-bill. OFBF supports RUMAs as an appropriate good-faith agreement between local governments and oil/gas companies to ensure proper road maintenance, especially during the construction phase of projects. RUMAs give our members certainty that the roads they rely on to run their business and provide for their families will be adequately maintained during construction and operation.

;

I would like to highlight two other areas of the bill that we encourage the committee to examine more closely. Regarding the statute of limitations for oil/gas lease termination, we request that the committee remove the provision that reduces the timeframe from 21 years to 3 years. Under ORC 2305.04, it states that "an action to recover the title to or possession of real property shall be brought within twenty-one years after the cause of action accrued." An oil and gas lease is an extensive agreement that affects title to the surface and mineral owners' interest in land. The Ohio Supreme Court examined which statute of limitations applies to an oil/gas lease termination either by its terms or by operation of law, due to lack of production, in the case of *Browne v. Artex* in 2018. The justices concluded that the relevant statute is R.C. 2305.04, which pertains to the recovery of *real estate*. Ohio Farm Bureau filed an amicus brief in support of the landowners in this case, urging the application of the 21-year statute of limitations. I would urge the committee to remove the changes to 2305.041 in the bill and retain current law.

We would also like the committee to consider amending the language surrounding a chief's unitization order (R.C. 1509.28). According to the LSC analysis, under the bill, operations conducted pursuant to a unitization order by the Chief of the Division of Oil and Gas Resources Management at ODNR constitute fulfillment of all expressed and implied terms of each lease and cannot be construed as a breach of any such terms. We believe that, essentially, what this language is trying to do is prevent a term in a lease from causing a well owner not to comply with the Chief's order, which we understand as a policy. However, the bill's changes to this section instead suggest that, as long as a chief's order is complied with, well owners don't have to follow terms in individual landowner leases that aren't in conflict with any chief's order. If a



*Working together for Ohio farmers to advance
agriculture and strengthen our communities.*

well owner agrees to certain terms with specific landowners in a given pool, they should be required to follow those provisions unless they prohibit compliance with the chief's order. We believe the existing language of the current law addresses the issue without adding confusion or language that may interfere with existing contracts.

We would like to thank Sen. Landis for continuing to work with interested parties to ensure this bill makes responsible updates that don't endanger landowner rights. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. I'd be happy to answer any questions at this time.