

I have the following issues with the Senate Bill 219, including

1. This bill prohibits the Ohio Department of Natural Resources from charging an oil and gas company more than the costs specifically outlined in the lease. Potentially the state could not fine companies that do not follow the rules or make companies pay to clean up after a spill, leak, or accident. This would encourage lawless and reckless behavior in companies that apply for leases to the detriment to the health and happiness of Ohio citizens.
2. This bill requires the state agency that manages the land to execute a lease within 30 days; currently there is no time limit. These leases are more complex than a standard lease due to safeguards that attempt to protect our parks and wildlife areas - thus trying to execute these leases in a rushed manner will lead to errors that will affect not only the enjoyment of the parks by Ohio citizens, but could lead to accidents that create major health risks.
3. This bill would give the Oil and Gas Land Management Commission only 90 days to decide on a nomination to frack public lands; currently they have 180 days. Given the decision at hand and the assessments that have to take place, it would be unwise to rush this any further.
4. This bill requires the commission to select the “highest and best bid” within 60 days. I find this language vague in the best description - it raises the idea that higher paying companies with worse safety records will be prioritized over lower paying companies with better safety records. Thus with enough money, safety risks will be passed off onto Ohio citizens and environment.