

I am writing to oppose the current version of SB 219 (that will establish the Oil & Gas Resolution and Remediation Fund) as a resident of Washington County, which has the second highest volume of brine waste in the state. Much of what appears in SB 219 will serve to increase the amount of high-pressure hydraulic fracturing in eastern Ohio and the amount of brine waste coming into our county, which is already overwhelmed by brine waste from other parts of eastern Ohio and from West Virginia. I do support the features of this bill which will address the problem of orphan wells. However, I vehemently object to the following features of this bill (features in bold, my comments in regular font):

- **Eliminating the authority of the Chief of the Division of Oil and Gas Resources Management at the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to refuse requests for expedited reviews of drilling permit applications.**

If you remove the chief's authority to make essential decisions like whether to expedite an application, oil & gas companies can make any kind of demand for expeditious decisions. This seems to be like a blank check for oil & gas companies in the review process.

- **Relieving the owner of a well from obligations and liabilities upon transfer of the well if the owner files required information with the Division of Oil and Gas Resources Management, instead of maintaining those obligations and liabilities until the transferee takes control of the well.**

Let us assume that a well owner decides that a well is no longer producing and wants to get rid of it; he/she can transfer it to DOGRM. In that case who is liable for any accidents or problems with the well? I assume it will have to be us the Ohio taxpayer. Maybe the well owner will transfer ownership to a shell company, which goes out of business or refuses to claim it. Once again, the taxpayer is left holding the bag. Please remove this language from SB 219

- **Eliminates the requirement that a horizontal well permit applicant enter into road maintenance agreements with local governments, instead making these voluntary agreements that would end after three years – and exempting the requirement for a horizontal well permit holder to obtain a special regional heavy hauling permit if the load size or weight exceeds legal limits.**

What happened to local control? I thought Republicans believed in this principle. Scores of trucks bearing water for high-pressure hydraulic fracturing into drilling areas and other trucks carrying out fracking waste ply the roads of eastern Ohio in profusion. Local communities need to exercise their right to set load limits and size limits on these heavy trucks.

Those of us in Washington County feel like we are the hapless victims of decisions made by the legislature and ODNR's Division of Oil & Gas Resources Management. We continue to voice our concerns about injection wells, for example, and nothing is done to address our issues. We are experiencing almost no benefits from the oil & gas business, and we are bearing the burden of risks of air and water pollution and millions of gallons of water being extracted for horizontal drilling.

Local communities should have the right to have a modicum level of decision-making authority about transport related to the oil & gas business. Could SB 219 at least do something to give local communities some control over their roads, such as which roads can be used for fracking traffic or the ability to be informed when trucks are exceeding load limits? When a roll over or a major spill occurs, it will be too late for these communities.

I appreciate the chance to provide this testimony about SB 219. I would respectfully ask that the Energy Committee change SB 219 to take out the features I mentioned above or reject the bill entirely.

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