

Ohio Senate Energy Committee

Opposition Testimony

Second Sub Senate Bill 219

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Randi Pokladnik, PhD. Board Member Ohio Valley Environmental Advocates

TO: Chair Chavez, Vice Chair Landis, Ranking Member Smith, and Members of the Senate Energy Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding the second Sub Senate Bill 219, sent out last week. My name is Randi Pokladnik, and I am a board member of the Ohio Valley Environmental Advocates. I previously sent testimony concerning HB 219 and am including additional testimony for the recently released SUB Bill 219.

Sub SB 219 would require the commission to make a decision on a nomination of a lease for public lands within 90 days of receiving it, then if approved, post it for bid immediately and award the bid within 60 days. Then Ohio Department of Natural Resources would have just 30 days to fully execute the lease. Considering the amount of data needed to fully and comprehensively evaluate a lease and the additional addendums, this time frame is unrealistic.

Citizens in the state would have about 45 days to review and submit comments concerning these leases. Often local citizens living in close proximity to these parks and public lands are the last to learn of the intent to lease. We then have to scramble to educate ourselves on the complexities of effects that would impact not only Ohio public lands but our local communities. I have been to the meetings of the Oil and Gas Land Management Committee and there is NO opportunity for citizens to make their concerns heard. In person testimony to these bills requires a two-hour drive, this makes it nearly impossible for most SE Ohio residents to attend hearings. Written comments are our only option and 45 days is hardly enough time to address the many issues in these leases.

I can say from first hand experience (living less than a mile from a fracking well pad), the externalities visited on the ecosystems and local residents are extreme and disturbing. The proposal to require a "good faith effort" with respect to the requirement that a horizontal well permit applicant enter into road maintenance agreements with local governments, instead making these agreements mandatory would place the burden of road upkeep on local communities. As I previously stated, my home was within a mile of a well pad and I can testify that the traffic going to and from this site was ridiculous. In some cases, we counted 15 brine trucks in a row along roads barely able to accommodate two cars side by side. In addition to brine trucks, roads were trafficked by sand, chemicals, water and gravel trucks. By the time the well pad is completed, many roads are a mess.

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 is also a mistake. Our kids' school buses travel these roads every day, often forced into playing "chicken" with heavy, overloaded trucks on rural roads.

Finally, the previous owner SHOULD NOT BE RELIEVED FROM OF OBLIGATIONS AND LIABILITIES upon transfer, but should be held liable until the transferee takes control of the well.

The wording in HB 219 that "allows an oil and gas company to negotiate "surface use" of state land" sounds suspiciously like a "give-a-way" to companies that would argue for the placement of a well pad "on" state lands. Ohio currently has one of the most lenient set-back distances for fracking pads. These set-backs do nothing to mitigate the noise, lights, air, and water pollution that is inherent in high pressure hydraulic fracking. For nearly two months during the drilling and fracking stages, the sounds of the well pad by our house mimicked the sound of an airplane during takeoff. At night the glow from the drilling rig lights lit up the night sky like a major city. Instead of enjoying the spring months of May and June, we were subjected to what amounted to an industrial process 24/7. To allow these pads to sit within a state park or wildlife area is deplorable.

Respectfully,

Randi Pokladnik

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