Senate Government Oversight & Reform Committee
Testimony on Division of Mineral Resources Management Occupational Licenses
Provided by Chief of the Division of Mineral Resources Management Benny McCament
April 15, 2026

Good morning Chair Manchester, Vice Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Weinstein and members of the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee. My name is Benny McCament, and I am the Chief of the Division of Mineral Resources Management (MRM) at the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today regarding the licensing and certification responsibilities that our division performs.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources ensures a balance between wise use and protection of our natural resources for the benefit of all. The mission of the Division of Mineral Resources Management is to provide for the safe and environmentally sound development and restoration of mineral and fossil fuel extraction sites.

Our Mine Safety program promotes safe mining practices for the protection of miners through services that include safety audits for accident prevention, examinations and issuing certifications, mine rescue support, safety training, and accident investigations. Blasting program staff approve blasting plans for mining permits, investigate blasting complaints, train on explosive use and rules, and conduct examinations and certify blasting professionals. All of this work is conducted for coal and industrial mineral mining operations that the Division regulates in order to protect miners and contractors working on mining sites, as well as the public in close proximity to mining sites.

The Mine Safety Program works from a budget of approximately $3 million per year. It is funded mostly by General Revenue Funds and by small grant by the Mine Safety Health Administration (MSHA) annual grant. The Blasting program and staff are funded by severance collected on both coal and industrial minerals. Less than $2,500 dollars total for all certifications annually is collected through examination and certification fees.

The Division issues the following certifications:

Permit/License	Ohio Revised Code	Federal Requirements
Certified Mine foreperson	1514.47(B); 1561.11;	30 CFR part 56
Qualified person in lieu of a certified mine foreperson	1514.47(D)	30 CFR part 56
Mine electrician	1561.14; 1561.13(E); 1561.23(A)(9)	30 CFR part 75.153; 30 CFR part 77.103
Mine foreperson of gaseous mines	1561.23(A)(1); 1561.13(B)(1); 1561.16(B)	30 CFR part 75.100
Foreperson of gaseous mines	1561.23(A)(3); 1561.13(C)(1); 1561.16(B)	30 CFR part 75.100
Mine foreperson of nongaseous mines	1561.23(A)(2); 1561.13(B)(2); 1561.17(A)	

The State of Ohio is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Provider of ADA Services

Foreperson of nongaseous mines	1561.23(A)(4); 1561.13(C)(2); 1561.17(A)	
Mine foreperson of surface mines	1561.23(A)(6);1561.13(B)(3); 1561.19(A)	30 CFR part 77.100
Foreperson of surface mines-preparatic plant/tipple foreperson	1561.23(A)(7); 1561.13(C)(4); 1561.19	30 CFR part 77.100
Foreperson of Surface Mines- Surface Coal and Auger Mine foreperson	1561.23(A)(7); 1561.19; 1561.13(C)(4);	30CFR part 77.100
Surface mine blaster	1513.161(B)(C); 1514.12(D); 1561.23(A)(10); 1561.20; 1561.13(F)	30 CFR part 850
Surface mine blaster- limited	1514.12(D); 1561.23(A)(10); 1561.20; 1561.13(F)	
Mine medical responder	1565.15	

The House did make some changes to the certifications our division issues in the House-passed version of House Bill 59. These changes include the elimination of the mine foreperson of nongaseous mines and the foreperson of nongaseous mines certificates related to coal mining because MSHA now considers all mines to be gaseous. As such, these certifications are no longer needed under federal rules. The House also removed outdated references in code to the fire boss, shot firer, and foreperson of surface maintenance facilities of underground or surface mine certifications that were eliminated in the most recent budget bill. These stand-alone certifications were eliminated because their duties all now fall under the responsibilities of individuals with the mine foreperson certification. These are all changes that the MRM requested and are supportive of. We appreciate the General Assembly's assistance in updating our portion of the revised code to better reflect current practice and mine safety industry needs.

Chair Manchester, Vice Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Weinstein and members of the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee, thank you again for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony today. I am happy to answer any questions that you may have at this time.