

House Amd #1 8/4 - Eliminate Oil and Gas Ex Board

Delegates Manchin, Fleischauer, Ireland, Anderson and Campbell move to amend the bill as follows:

To amend the title and enacting sections to repeal §22C-7-1, §22C-7-2 and §22C-7-3 of the code and to further amend said bill by inserting section 2, article 6 of said chapter 22, to be amended to read as follows:

1 **§22-6-2. Secretary -- Powers and duties generally; department**  
2 **records open to public; inspectors.**

3 (a) The Secretary shall have as his or her duty the  
4 supervision of the execution and enforcement of matters related to  
5 oil and gas set out in this article and in articles eight and nine  
6 of this chapter.

7 (b) The Secretary is authorized to propose rules for  
8 legislative approval in accordance with the provisions of article  
9 three, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code necessary to effectuate  
10 the above stated purposes.

11 (c) The Secretary shall have full charge of the oil and gas  
12 matters set out in this article and in articles eight and nine of  
13 this chapter. In addition to all other powers and duties conferred  
14 upon him or her, the Secretary shall have the power and duty to:

15 (1) Supervise and direct the activities of the office of oil  
16 and gas and see that the purposes set forth in subsections (a) and  
17 (b) of this section are carried out;

1           (2) ~~Employ a supervising oil and gas inspector and oil and gas~~  
2 ~~inspectors~~ Determine the number of supervising oil and gas  
3 inspectors and oil and gas inspectors needed to carry out the  
4 purposes of this article and articles six-a, eight, nine, ten, and  
5 twenty-one of this chapter and appoint them as such. All  
6 appointees shall be qualified civil service employees, but no  
7 person is eligible for appointment until he or she has served in a  
8 probationary status for a period of six months to the satisfaction  
9 of the Secretary;

10           (3) Supervise and direct such oil and gas inspectors and  
11 supervising inspector in the performance of their duties;

12           (4) ~~Suspend for good cause any oil and gas inspector or~~  
13 ~~supervising inspector without compensation for a period not~~  
14 ~~exceeding thirty days in any calendar year~~ Make investigations or  
15 inspections necessary to ensure complete compliance with the  
16 provisions of this code and enforce the provisions of this article  
17 and articles six-a, eight, nine, ten, and twenty-one of this  
18 chapter;

19           (5) Prepare report forms to be used by oil and gas inspectors  
20 or the supervising inspector in making their findings, orders and  
21 notices, upon inspections made in accordance with this article and  
22 articles ~~seven,~~ six-a, eight, nine, ~~and ten,~~ and eleven of this  
23 chapter;

24           (6) Employ a hearing officer and such clerks, stenographers

1 and other employees, as may be necessary to carry out his or her  
2 duties and the purposes of the office of oil and gas and fix their  
3 compensation;

4 (7) Hear and determine applications made by owners, well  
5 operators and coal operators for the annulment or revision of  
6 orders made by oil and gas inspectors or the supervising inspector,  
7 and to make inspections, in accordance with the provisions of this  
8 article and articles eight and nine of this chapter;

9 (8) Cause a properly indexed permanent and public record to be  
10 kept of all inspections made by the Secretary or by oil and gas  
11 inspectors or the supervising inspector;

12 (9) Conduct such research and studies as the Secretary shall  
13 deem necessary to aid in protecting the health and safety of  
14 persons employed within or at potential or existing oil or gas  
15 production fields within this state, to improve drilling and  
16 production methods and to provide for the more efficient protection  
17 and preservation of oil and gas-bearing rock strata and property  
18 used in connection therewith;

19 (10) Collect a permit fee of \$400 for each permit application  
20 filed other than an application for a deep well, horizontal well,  
21 or a coalbed methane well; and collect a permit fee of \$650 for  
22 each permit application filed for a deep well: *Provided*, That no  
23 permit application fee shall be required when an application is  
24 submitted solely for the plugging or replugging of a well, or to

1 modify an existing application for which the operator previously  
2 has submitted a permit fee under this section. All application  
3 fees required hereunder shall be in lieu of and not in addition to  
4 any fees imposed under article eleven of this chapter relating to  
5 discharges of stormwater but shall be in addition to any other fees  
6 required by the provisions of this article: *Provided, however,*  
7 That upon a final determination by the United States Environmental  
8 Protection Agency regarding the scope of the exemption under  
9 section 402(1)(2) of the federal Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C.  
10 1342(1)(2)), which determination requires a "national pollutant  
11 discharge elimination system" permit for stormwater discharges from  
12 the oil and gas operations described therein, any permit fees for  
13 stormwater permits required under article eleven of this chapter  
14 for such operations shall not exceed \$100.

15 (11) Perform all other duties which are expressly imposed upon  
16 the Secretary by the provisions of this chapter;

17 (12) Perform all duties as the permit issuing authority for  
18 the state in all matters pertaining to the exploration,  
19 development, production, storage and recovery of this state's oil  
20 and gas;

21 (13) Adopt rules with respect to the issuance, denial,  
22 retention, suspension or revocation of permits, authorizations and  
23 requirements of this chapter, which rules shall assure that the  
24 rules, permits and authorizations issued by the Secretary are

1 adequate to satisfy the purposes of this article and articles six-  
2 a, seven, eight, nine, ~~and~~ ten and twenty-one of this chapter  
3 particularly with respect to the consolidation of the various state  
4 and federal programs which place permitting requirements on the  
5 exploration, development, production, storage and recovery of this  
6 state's oil and gas: *Provided,* That notwithstanding any provisions  
7 of this article and articles seven, eight, nine and ten of this  
8 chapter to the contrary, the environmental quality board shall have  
9 the sole authority pursuant to section three, article three,  
10 chapter twenty-two-b to promulgate rules setting standards of water  
11 quality applicable to waters of the state; and

12 (14) Perform such acts as may be necessary or appropriate to  
13 secure to this state the benefits of federal legislation  
14 establishing programs relating to the exploration, development,  
15 production, storage and recovery of this state's oil and gas, which  
16 programs are assumable by the state.

17 (d) The Secretary shall have authority to visit and inspect  
18 any well or well site and any other oil or gas facility in this  
19 state and may call for the assistance of any oil and gas inspector  
20 or inspectors or supervising inspector whenever such assistance is  
21 necessary in the inspection of any such well or well site or any  
22 other oil or gas facility. Similarly, all oil and gas inspectors  
23 and the supervising inspector shall have authority to visit and  
24 inspect any well or well site and any other oil or gas facility in

1 this state. They shall make all necessary surveys and inspections  
2 of oil and gas operations required by this article and articles  
3 six-a, eight, nine, ten and twenty-one of this chapter; administer  
4 and enforce all oil and gas laws and rules; and perform other  
5 duties and services as may be prescribed by the secretary.  
6 Inspectors shall give particular attention to all conditions of  
7 each permit to ensure complete compliance therewith. They shall  
8 note and describe all violations of this article and articles six-  
9 a, eight, nine, ten or twenty-one of this chapter and immediately  
10 report those violations to the secretary in writing, furnishing at  
11 the same time a copy of the report to the operator concerned. Any  
12 well operator, coal operator operating coal seams beneath the tract  
13 of land, or the coal seam owner or lessee, if any, if said owner or  
14 lessee is not yet operating said coal seams beneath said tract of  
15 land may request the Secretary to have an immediate inspection  
16 made. The operator or owner of every well or well site or any  
17 other oil or gas facility shall cooperate with the Secretary, all  
18 oil and gas inspectors and the supervising inspector in making  
19 inspections or obtaining information.

20 ~~(e) Oil and gas inspectors shall devote their full time and~~  
21 ~~undivided attention to the performance of their duties, and they~~  
22 ~~shall be responsible for the inspection of all wells or well sites~~  
23 ~~or other oil or gas facilities in their respective districts as~~  
24 ~~often as may be required in the performance of their duties.~~

1           ~~(f)~~ (e) All records of the office shall be open to the public.