



H.B. 60

124th General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Reps. Schuring, Hagan, Hollister, Cirelli, Roman, Jerse, Jolivette, Calvert, Grendell, Manning, Metzger, Hoops, Williams, Womer Benjamin, Goodman, Young, Perry, D. Miller, Krupinski, Callender, Ogg, Patton, Willamowski, DePiero, Jones, Distel, Allen, Coates, Metelsky, DeWine

BILL SUMMARY

- Creates a joint legislative study committee to examine high prices for natural gas in Ohio and submit to the Governor and General Assembly a report regarding possible state actions for relief.
- Declares an emergency.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Joint legislative study committee

(sec. 4929.20)

Duties

The bill creates a joint legislative study committee to examine the causes and effects of high natural gas prices in Ohio. The committee's stated purpose is to consider and recommend any state legislation or administrative action that would assist in the short- and long-term in alleviating the serious burden on all Ohioans of high natural gas prices.

The bill requires the committee to examine all of the following issues, including but not limited to:

- (1) Actions that could be taken to increase natural gas supplies in the Ohio market;
- (2) Reasons underlying the capping of a significant number of natural gas wells in Ohio;

- (3) Incentives to induce more gas exploration in Ohio;
- (4) Changes in state regulation of natural gas to ensure ample options and opportunities for consumers to switch suppliers when prices increase;
- (5) Changes in industry practices, including meter reading procedures, estimated billing methods, and budget billing;
- (6) The ability of natural gas suppliers to increase prices during peak demand periods.

The committee expressly must gather and review necessary information and data and encourage testimony and comment by all interested parties, including consumers, industry representatives, and state agencies. (Sec. 4929.20(A).)

The committee must complete its study and submit a report not later than August 31, 2001. The report must contain its findings and recommendations and any proposed legislation. It must be provided to the Governor, the President and Minority Leader of the Senate, the Speaker and Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, and the House and Senate committees having primary jurisdiction regarding public utility matters. (Sec. 4929.20(C).)

Composition and operation

The committee must consist of seven House members appointed by the Speaker, not more than four of whom are of the majority party; and seven Senate members appointed by the President of the Senate, not more than four of whom are of the majority party. The Speaker and the President of the Senate each shall select one of the majority party appointees to serve as co-chairs.

The committee must meet at the call of the co-chairs. Any vacancy occurring among the committee members must be filled in the manner of the original appointment. (Sec. 4929.20(B).)

Emergency clause

(Section 2)

The bill is declared an emergency measure, and, as a result of this declaration, the bill will take immediate effect upon enactment. The stated reason for the emergency is "the immediate threat to Ohio consumers of increasing natural gas prices and the urgent need for the General Assembly to explore possible state legislation and administrative action to provide Ohioans with relief from high natural gas prices at the earliest possible time."

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE	JOURNAL ENTRY
Introduced	02-01-01	p. 114

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