

Environment and Natural Resources

Sub. H.B. 225

Reps. Thompson, Hambley, Householder, Stein, Brenner, Riedel, Dean, Schaffer, Seitz, Keller, Edwards, Greenspan, Patterson, Goodman, Wiggam, Retherford, Ginter, Barnes, Young, Romanchuk, Landis, Kick, Patton, Faber, West, Boccieri, Hagan, O'Brien, Gavarone, Anielski, Antonio, Arndt, Boyd, Carfagna, Craig, Green, Holmes, Hoops, T. Johnson, Kent, Lang, LaTourette, Lepore-Hagan, Manning, Miller, Pelanda, Reineke, Roegner, Rogers, Ryan, Schuring, Sheehy, Slaby, K. Smith, R. Smith, Sprague, Sweeney, Vitale

Sens. Gardner, Hoagland, LaRose, Balderson, Burke, Coley, Dolan, Eklund, Hackett, Hottinger, Huffman, Jordan, Kunze, Lehner, Obhof, O'Brien, Oelslager, Peterson, Schiavoni, Tavares, Terhar, Thomas, Williams, Yuko

Effective date: September 28, 2018; appropriation effective June 29, 2018

Idle and orphaned oil and gas wells

- Authorizes a landowner who discovers an idle and orphaned oil or gas well to report its existence to the Chief of the Division of Oil and Gas Resources Management in the Department of Natural Resources.
- Requires the Chief to:
 - Inspect a well reported by a landowner within 30 days after the landowner reports its existence;
 - Establish a scoring matrix for idle and orphaned wells;
 - Include in the matrix a system that classifies those wells as distressed high priority, moderate medium priority, and maintenance low priority; and
 - Use the matrix to prioritize well plugging and land restoration.

Oil and Gas Well Fund

- Increases, from 14% to 30%, the portion of the Oil and Gas Well Fund revenues that must be used for plugging idle and orphaned wells.
- Increases the FY 2019 appropriation from the Oil and Gas Well Fund for oil and gas well plugging by \$9 million, to a total of \$15 million.

Notice requirements

- Revises notice requirements and procedures that the Chief must follow once the Chief determines that a well is idle and orphaned.

- Reduces, from 60 days to 30 days after receiving notice from the Chief, the time by which the holder of a lien on equipment appurtenant to an idle and orphaned well must act to properly plug the well before the equipment is forfeited to the state.

Contracts for plugging

- Authorizes the Chief to make expenditures to plug an idle and orphaned well pursuant to contracts entered into by other state agencies, and specifies that when another agency contracts for the work, the Chief must prepare the scope of work.
- Eliminates law that required a contractor to provide a bid guaranty, surety bond, or letter of credit when bidding for contracts with the Chief to plug an idle and orphaned well.
- Requires a contractor hired by a landowner to plug an idle and orphaned well to be insured and bonded.
- Exempts a landowner from paying the permit application fee otherwise required to be paid by a person who plugs an idle and orphaned well.
- Authorizes the Chief to reject an application to plug an idle and orphaned well if the Chief determines that plugging other wells takes priority.
- Requires the Chief, once plugging has been properly completed, to pay the contractor for the cost of plugging and restoration, rather than requiring the Chief to reimburse the landowner after the landowner has paid the contractor as in prior law.

Quarterly and annual reports

- Requires the Chief to fulfill quarterly and annual reporting requirements regarding plugging activities.

Am. Sub. S.B. 51

(For details of the act's fiscal provisions, see the [LSC Fiscal Note and Local Impact Statement](#))

Sens. Skindell and Eklund, Thomas, Schiavoni, Williams, Hite, O'Brien, LaRose, Burke, Dolan, Gardner, Hackett, Lehner, Manning, Oelslager, Peterson, Tavares, Terhar, Yuko

Reps. Antonio, Barnes, Craig, Duffey, Holmes, Lanese, Lepore-Hagan, Miller, Pelanda, Reineke, Riedel, Rogers, Scherer, K. Smith, Strahorn, Young

Effective date: March 20, 2019; operating appropriations effective December 19, 2018

Special improvement districts

- Adds Lake Erie shoreline improvement projects to the list of public improvements that may be financed by a special improvement district (SID).
- Allows a SID created for shoreline improvement to extend into the territory of Lake Erie, but exempts the state from any special assessment levied against the territory.

- Allows a SID created for shoreline improvement to include noncontiguous parcels.
- Authorizes the levy of a special assessment within a SID created for shoreline improvement for up to 30 years.
- Requires SIDs created for shoreline improvement to comply with all zoning, environmental, and coastal management laws and rules.

Sales and use tax

- Exempts from sales and use tax exports that are in Ohio only temporarily for storage and package consolidation before being delivered to a foreign citizen.

Background checks

- Establishes a criminal background check procedure for public employees and contractors with access to federal tax information.

Municipal net profits tax

- Changes the definition of "taxable year" for a business that elects to have the Department of Taxation administer its municipal income tax.

Property tax

- Provides for one-time payments to certain taxing districts to partially compensate those districts for property tax revenue losses due to a decline in the value of nuclear power plants.
- Establishes a temporary procedure by which a village may apply for a property tax exemption and the abatement of unpaid property taxes for a former school building.
- Authorizes a retrospective tax exemption for improvements subject to a municipal tax increment financing (TIF) arrangement that were not exempt for prior years due to a failure to comply with exemption procedures.
- Requires a recomputation of foundation funding for a school district if a nonprofit hospital in the district was mistakenly subject to property tax for 2016.

Lodging tax

- Extends the deadline for Clermont County to levy an additional 1% lodging tax by extending the date by which the county's convention and visitors' bureau must first enter into a contract to construct a sports facility.

Conveyance of state property

- Authorizes the conveyance of the Oliver Ocasek Government Office Building in Akron to the City of Akron.

Appropriations

- Makes capital and operating appropriations.

Sub. S.B. 257

Sens. Uecker and O'Brien, Huffman, Hottinger, LaRose, Lehner, Wilson, Beagle, Sykes, Skindell, Gardner, Balderson, Brown, Burke, Coley, Dolan, Hackett, Hoagland, Manning, McColley, Obhof, Oelslager, Peterson, Schiavoni, Tavares, Terhar, Yuko

Reps. Landis, O'Brien, Wiggam, Anielski, Antani, Arndt, Blessing, Brenner, Brown, Carfagna, Cera, Clyde, Craig, Cupp, Dean, Dever, Edwards, Faber, Gavarone, Ginter, Green, Greenspan, Hambley, Hoops, T. Johnson, Kick, Leland, Lepore-Hagan, Miller, Patterson, Patton, Pelanda, Perales, Ramos, Retherford, Rezabek, Riedel, Rogers, Ryan, Schaffer, Scherer, Schuring, Seitz, Sheehy, Stein, Strahorn, Sweeney, Thompson, Vitale, West, Wilkin, Young, Smith

Effective date: September 28, 2018

Multi-year, lifetime, and combination licenses

- Allows the Chief of the Division of Wildlife in the Department of Natural Resources to issue multi-year and lifetime hunting and fishing licenses to Ohio residents.
- Creates the Multi-year and Lifetime License Fund and requires that multi-year and lifetime hunting and fishing license fees be deposited into it.
- Requires money in the Fund that is derived from each fee to be transferred on a prorated annual basis to the funds in which hunting and fishing license fees are ordinarily deposited.
- Authorizes the Chief to create combination packages with various hunting and fishing licenses and permits.
- Requires the Chief to charge a discounted rate for a combination package that is lower than the aggregate rates that would normally apply to each individual license and permit.

Lake Erie sport fishing district permit

- Creates the Lake Erie sport fishing district permit for nonresidents to fish in Lake Erie, its embayments, and specified additional areas connected to Lake Erie.
- Prohibits a nonresident from taking fish from the district between January 1 and April without a nonresident Lake Erie Sport Fishing District permit.
- Restricts use of the money generated by the \$10 permit fee to specified purposes related to Lake Erie.

Other hunting and fishing provisions

- Decreases the annual hunting license fee for nonresident youth so that it equals the fee for resident youth.
- Requires applicants for specified hunting and fishing licenses and permits to pay the issuing agent the greater of \$1 or 4% of the license or permit cost, instead of a flat \$1 fee as in prior law.
- Creates a resident apprentice senior hunting license and an apprentice senior fur taker permit.
- Eliminates law that prohibited a person from purchasing more than three apprentice hunting licenses of any type or more than three apprentice fur taker permits of any type.
- Specifies that each annual hunting license, deer or wild turkey permit, and fur taker permit is valid until March 1 of a given year, instead of until midnight on August 31 of the year after the year in which the license or permit was issued as in former law.
- Specifies that each annual fishing license begins on the date of issuance and expires one year after, instead of beginning on March 1 and expiring on the last day of February of the following year as in former law.
- Allows the Chief to exempt a person from the requirement to obtain a fishing license.

All-purpose vehicle

- Changes the term "electric powered all-purpose vehicle" to "all-purpose vehicle" and removes the requirement that this type of vehicle be battery powered, self-propelled, and electric, thus allowing a person with a mobility impairment to use a broader range of vehicles to hunt.