

**Fifty-eighth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota
In Regular Session Commencing Tuesday, January 7, 2003**

SENATE BILL NO. 2311
(Senators Wardner, Bowman, O'Connell)
(Representatives Rennerfeldt, Wald, Warner)

AN ACT to create and enact a new chapter to title 54 and a new section to chapter 57-51.1 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to creating and establishing an oil and gas research council and oil and gas research fund; and to provide a continuing appropriation.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:

SECTION 1. A new chapter to title 54 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

Definitions.

1. "Commission" means the North Dakota industrial commission.
2. "Council" means the oil and gas research council.

Oil and gas research council. There is created the oil and gas research council. The purpose of the council is to coordinate a program designed to demonstrate to the general public the importance of the state oil and gas exploration and production industry, to encourage and promote the wise and efficient use of energy, to promote environmentally sound exploration and production methods and technologies, to develop the state's oil and gas resources, and to support research and educational activities concerning the oil and natural gas exploration and production industry.

Commission to operate council. The commission shall operate, manage, and control the council.

Powers and duties of commission in managing and operating council. The commission is granted all the powers necessary or appropriate to carry out and effectuate the purposes of this Act, including the power to:

1. Make grants or loans, and to provide other forms of financial assistance as necessary or appropriate, to qualified persons for research, development, marketing, and educational projects, and processes or activities directly related to oil and gas exploration and production industry;
2. Enter into contracts or agreements to carry out the purposes of this Act, including authority to contract for the administration of the oil and gas research, development, marketing, and educational program;
3. Keep accurate records of all financial transactions performed under this Act;
4. Cooperate with any private, local, state, or national commission, organization, or agent, or group and to make contracts and agreements for programs benefiting the oil and gas industry;
5. Accept donations, grants, contributions, and gifts from any public or private source and deposit such in the oil and gas research fund; and
6. Make and explore orders, rules, and regulations necessary to effectuate the purposes of this Act.

Oil and gas research council.

1. The oil and gas research council is composed of seven members, four of whom must currently be engaged in and have at least five years of active experience in the oil and natural gas exploration and production industry. The council consists of:
 - a. Four members appointed by the governor from a list provided by the North Dakota oil and gas association. The governor may reject the list and request the association to submit a new list until the appointments are made.
 - b. One member appointed by the governor from a list provided by the North Dakota association of oil and gas producing counties. The governor may reject the list and request the association to submit a new list until the appointment is made.
 - c. The executive director of the North Dakota petroleum council, or the executive director's designee.
 - d. A county commissioner from an oil producing county appointed by the governor.
 - e. The director of the oil and gas division and the state geologist shall serve on the council as advisory nonvoting members.
2. Subject to subsection 7, the terms of office for members of the council are three years but of those first appointed, two serve for one year, two serve for two years, and three serve for three years.
3. The council shall select its chairman from among its members.
4. The council shall have at least one regular meeting each year and such additional meetings as the chairman determines necessary at a time and place to be fixed by the chairman. Special meetings must be called by the chairman on written request of any three members. Four members constitute a quorum.
5. The council shall recommend to the commission the approval of grants, loans, or other financial assistance necessary or appropriate for funding, research, development, marketing, and educational projects or activities and any other matters related to this Act.
6. Each member of the council is entitled to receive reimbursement of expenses in performing official duties in amounts provided by law for other state offices.
7. Members of the council appointed by the governor serve at the pleasure of the governor.

Access to council records.

1. Materials and data submitted to, or made or received by, the council or commission, to the extent that the council determines the materials or data consist of trade secrets or commercial, financial, or proprietary information of individuals or entities applying to or contracting with the council or receiving council services under this Act, are not public records subject to section 44-04-18 and section 6 of article XI of the Constitution of North Dakota, and are subject to section 44-04-18.4.
2. A person or entity must file a request with the council or commission to have material designated as confidential under subsection 1. The request must contain any information required by the council and must include at least the following:
 - a. A general description of the nature of the information sought to be protected.
 - b. An explanation of why the information derives independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to other persons.

- c. An explanation of why the information is not readily ascertainable by proper means by other persons.
 - d. A general description of any person or entity that may obtain economic value from disclosure or use of the information, and how the person or entity may obtain this value.
 - e. A description of the efforts used to maintain the secrecy of the information.
3. Any request under subsection 2 is confidential. The council shall examine the request and determine whether the information is relevant to the matter at hand and is a trade secret under the definition in section 47-25.1-01 or 44-04-18.4. If the council determines the information is either not relevant or not a trade secret, the council shall notify the requester and the requester may ask for the return of the information and request within ten days of the notice. If no return is sought, the information and request are a public record.
4. The names or identities of independent technical reviewers on any project or program and the names of council members making recommendations are confidential, may not be disclosed by the council, and are not public records subject to section 44-04-18 or section 6 of article XI of the Constitution of North Dakota.

SECTION 2. A new section to chapter 57-51.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

Oil and gas research fund - Deposits - Continuing appropriation. There is established a special fund in the state treasury to be known as the oil and gas research fund. In the 2003-05 biennium, the first fifty thousand dollars of revenue from the state's share of the oil and gas production tax and oil extraction tax must be deposited into a special fund known as the oil and gas research fund. In the 2003-05 biennium, if actual revenues for the 2001-03 biennium from the state general fund share of the oil and gas production tax and oil extraction tax exceeded seventy-one million sixty-four thousand dollars, the excess up to five hundred thousand dollars must be deposited in a special fund known as the oil and gas research fund, as provided in this section. After the 2003-05 biennium, two percent of the state's share of the oil and gas gross production tax and oil extraction tax revenues that are deposited into the state general fund, up to one million three hundred thousand dollars per biennium, must be deposited into the oil and gas research fund. The state treasurer shall transfer into the oil and gas research fund two percent of the state's share of the oil and gas production tax and the oil extraction tax revenues that have been deposited into the general fund for the previous three months. All money deposited in the oil and gas research fund is appropriated as a continuing appropriation to the council to be used for purposes stated in section 1 of this Act.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

Secretary of the Senate

Chief Clerk of the House

This certifies that the within bill originated in the Senate of the Fifty-eighth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota and is known on the records of that body as Senate Bill No. 2311.

Senate Vote: Yeas 42 Nays 5 Absent 0

House Vote: Yeas 87 Nays 3 Absent 4

Secretary of the Senate

Received by the Governor at _____ M. on _____, 2003.

Approved at _____ M. on _____, 2003.

Governor

Filed in this office this _____ day of _____, 2003,
at _____ o'clock _____ M.

Secretary of State