Sixty-sixth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota

SENATE BILL NO. 2212

Introduced by

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Senators Bekkedahl, Patten, Unruh

Representatives Hatlestad, Jones, Steiner

- 1 A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact section 47-16-39.2 of the North Dakota Century Code,
- 2 relating to authorization for the board of university and schools lands to impose a civil penalty
- 3 for failure to produce records; and to provide a penalty.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:

5 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 47-16-39.2 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

47-16-39.2. Inspection of production and royalty payment records - Penalty.

- 1. A royalty owner, a royalty owner's assignee, or a designated representative, upon written notice, is entitled to inspect and copy the oil and gas production and royalty payment records for the lease of the person obligated to pay royalties under the lease or division order. The person obligated to pay royalties under the lease shall make that person's oil and gas royalty payment and production records available for inspection and copying at that person's usual and customary place of business within the United States. A royalty owner may bring an action to compel the person obligated to pay royalties to allow inspection and copying of oil and gas production royalty payment records. In order for the royalty owner to prevail in such an action, the royalty owner must establish that:
 - a. The royalty owner or the royalty owner's assignee complied with notice requirements of this section;
- 20 <u>2. b.</u> The notice specified the lease involved, the time period under review and the records requested;
- 22 3. C. The royalty owner notified the person obligated to pay royalties at the address printed on the information statement as prescribed by rules adopted by the industrial commission pursuant to section 38-08-06.3; and

- 1 4. <u>d.</u> The person obligated to pay royalties denied inspection of the records or failed to respond within thirty days of service of notice.
 - 2. The district court for the county in which the oil or gas well is located has jurisdiction over all proceedings brought pursuant to this section. If the royalty owner or the royalty owner's assignee is successful in any proceeding brought pursuant to this section, the district court shall allow the royalty owner or the royalty owner's assignee to recover court costs; reasonable costs, fees, disbursements, and expenses incurred by the royalty owner or the royalty owner's assignee or a designated representative in inspecting and copying the oil and gas production and royalty payment records of the person obligated to pay royalties under the lease; and reasonable attorney's fees.
 - 3. If a royalty owner, a royalty owner's assignee, or a designated representative is the board of university and school lands and, the board shall send a letter to the person obligated to pay royalties does not make the records requesting the information necessary to conduct the board's audit together with the information outlined in subsection 1-available to. The letter must be sent by registered mail, return receipt requested. If the requested information is not received by the board within thirtyninety days of receiving notice from the board the date of receipt of the letter, the board may impose a civil penalty of up to five one thousand dollars per day, as determined by the board pursuant to board policies, until the records are made available. Each day's violation is a separate offense. The board, for good cause shown, may waive all or any part of the penalty provided by this subsection. A penalty paid under this section must be deposited in the common schools trust fund.

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