

Sixty-ninth  
Legislative Assembly  
of North Dakota

**SENATE BILL NO. 2397  
with Conference Committee Amendments**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2397**

Introduced by

Senators Enget, Sorvaag, Sickler

Representative Kempenich

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new subsection to section 57-51.1-03 of the North  
2 Dakota Century Code, relating to a limited exemption for development incentive wells; to amend  
3 and reenact sections 57-51-02.6, 57-51-05, and 57-51.1-01 of the North Dakota Century Code,  
4 relating to the temporary exemption for oil and gas wells employing a system to avoid flaring, an  
5 exemption from gross production tax for gas produced from certain enhanced oil recovery  
6 projects, and the definition of development incentive well; to provide an effective date; and to  
7 provide an expiration date.

8 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

9 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 57-51-02.6 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
10 amended and reenacted as follows:

11 **57-51-02.6. Temporary exemption for oil and gas wells employing a system to avoid**  
12 **flaring.**

13 Gas is exempt from the tax under section 57-51-02.2 for a period of two years and thirty  
14 days from the time of first production if the gas is:

- 15 1. Collected and used at the well site to power an electrical generator that consumes at-  
16 least seventy-five percent of the gas from the well; or
- 17 2. Collected at the well site by a system that intakes at least seventy-five percent of the  
18 gas and natural gas liquids volume from the well for beneficial consumption by means  
19 of compression to liquid for use as fuel, transport to a processing facility, production of  
20 petrochemicals or fertilizer, conversion to liquid fuels, separating and collecting over  
21 fifty percent of the propane and heavier hydrocarbons, or other value-added  
22 processes as approved by the industrial commission.

1       **SECTION 2. AMENDMENT.** Section 57-51-05 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
2 amended and reenacted as follows:

3       **57-51-05. Payment of tax on monthly basis - When tax due - When delinquent -**  
4 **Payment by purchaser - By producer - How casinghead gas taxed - Exemptions.**

- 5       1. The gross production tax on oil or gas, ~~as herein provided,~~ must be paid on a monthly  
6 basis. The tax on oil is due and payable on the twenty-fifth day of the month  
7 succeeding the month of production. The tax on gas is due and payable on the  
8 fifteenth day of the second month succeeding the month of production. If the tax is not  
9 paid as required by this section, it becomes delinquent and must be collected as  
10 provided in this chapter. The penalty does not apply if ninety percent of the tax due  
11 has been paid with the monthly return and the taxpayer files an amended monthly  
12 return and pays the total tax due within sixty days from the original due date. The  
13 commissioner, upon request and a proper showing of the necessity ~~therefor~~ for an  
14 extension, may grant an extension of time, not to exceed fifteen days, for paying the  
15 tax and when the request is granted the tax is not delinquent until the extended period  
16 has expired. Any taxpayer who requests and is granted an extension of time for filing a  
17 return shall pay, with the tax, interest at the rate of twelve percent per annum from the  
18 date the tax was due to the date the tax is paid.
- 19       2. On oil or gas produced and sold, the gross production tax ~~thereon~~ must be paid by the  
20 purchaser, and the purchaser is authorized to deduct in making settlement with the  
21 producer or royalty owner, the amount of tax paid; provided, ~~that~~ in the event oil  
22 produced is not sold but is retained by the producer, the tax on the oil not sold must be  
23 paid by the producer, including the tax due on royalty oil not sold; provided further, that  
24 in settlement with the royalty owner the producer has the right to deduct the amount of  
25 the tax paid on royalty oil or to deduct therefrom royalty oil equivalent in value at the  
26 time the tax becomes due with the amount of the tax paid.
- 27       3. Gas when produced and utilized in any manner, ~~except when used for fuel or~~  
28 ~~otherwise used in the operation of any lease or premises in the drilling for or~~  
29 ~~production of oil or gas therefrom, or for repressuring thereon,~~ must be considered for  
30 the purpose of this chapter, as to the amount utilized, as gas actually produced and  
31 saved, except gas:

- a. Used for fuel or otherwise used in the operation of any lease or premises in the drilling for or production of oil or gas from the lease or premises, including repressuring on the lease or premises; and
- b. Produced from an enhanced oil recovery project utilizing the injection of gas, either alone or in combination with other fluids, for the purpose of testing the feasibility of enhanced oil recovery operations on a temporary basis for one or more spacing units or employing enhanced oil recovery operations for an extended or indefinite period of time on a fieldwide basis through unitization of the reservoir that produces oil and gas. The exemption under this subdivision applies to all enhanced oil recovery projects created and established by the industrial commission after June 30, 2025, and for any gas produced after the date of first production following initial injection of gas until all gas injected as part of the enhanced oil recovery project has been recovered from the reservoir being tested or unitized.

4. All calculations of the gross production tax on oil or gas, including production, distribution, and claims for credit or refund, are based on the month of production and must be credited to that month.

**SECTION 3. AMENDMENT.** Section 57-51.1-01 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

**57-51.1-01. Definitions for oil extraction tax.**

For the purposes of this chapter:

1. "Average daily production" of a well means the qualified maximum total production of oil from the well during a calendar month period divided by the number of calendar days in that period, and "qualified maximum total production" of a well means that the well must have been maintained at the maximum efficient rate of production as defined and determined by rule adopted by the industrial commission in furtherance of its authority under chapter 38-08.
2. "Development incentive well" means, as determined and certified by the industrial commission, a well spud after June 30, 2025, which:
  - a. Utilizes a new or innovative drilling or completion technique that constitutes a technical advancement that has not been previously utilized with demonstrated

1                    success by the operator within the specific formation targeted for development by  
2                    that operator;

3                    b. Demonstrates the capability to develop reserves within the target formation that  
4                    would otherwise remain underdeveloped or undeveloped under existing drilling or  
5                    completion techniques; and

6                    c. Is designed and anticipated to, more likely than not, increase the number of new  
7                    wells, additional production, or the ultimate recovery of oil or gas within the target  
8                    formation.

9                    3. "Horizontal well" means a well with a horizontal displacement of the well bore drilled at  
10                    an angle of at least eighty degrees within the productive formation of at least three  
11                    hundred feet [91.44 meters].

12                    3.4. "Oil" means petroleum, crude oil, mineral oil, casinghead gasoline, and all liquid  
13                    hydrocarbons that are recovered from gas on the lease incidental to the production of  
14                    the gas.

15                    4.5. "Property" means the right which arises from a lease or fee interest, as a whole or any  
16                    designated portion thereof, to produce oil. A producer shall treat as a separate  
17                    property each separate and distinct producing reservoir subject to the same right to  
18                    produce crude oil; provided, that such reservoir is recognized by the industrial  
19                    commission as a producing formation that is separate and distinct from, and not in  
20                    communication with, any other producing formation.

21                    5.6. "Qualifying secondary recovery project" means a project employing water flooding. To  
22                    be eligible for the tax exemption provided under section 57-51.1-03, a secondary  
23                    recovery project must be certified as qualifying by the industrial commission and the  
24                    project operator must have obtained incremental production as defined in subsection 3  
25                    of section 57-51.1-03.

26                    6.7. "Qualifying tertiary recovery project" means a project for enhancing recovery of oil  
27                    which meets the requirements of section 4993(c), Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as  
28                    amended through December 31, 1986, and includes the following methods for  
29                    recovery:

30                    a. Miscible fluid displacement.

31                    b. Steam drive injection.

- 1 c. Microemulsion.
- 2 d. In situ combustion.
- 3 e. Polymer augmented water flooding.
- 4 f. Cyclic steam injection.
- 5 g. Alkaline flooding.
- 6 h. Carbonated water flooding.
- 7 i. Immiscible carbon dioxide displacement.
- 8 j. New tertiary recovery methods certified by the industrial commission.

9 It does not include water flooding, unless the water flooding is used as an element of  
10 one of the qualifying tertiary recovery techniques described in this subsection, or  
11 immiscible natural gas injection. To be eligible for the tax exemption provided under  
12 section 57-51.1-03, a tertiary recovery project must be certified as qualifying by the  
13 industrial commission, the project operator must continue to operate the unit as a  
14 qualifying tertiary recovery project, and the project operator must have obtained  
15 incremental production as defined in subsection 3 of section 57-51.1-03.

16 ~~7-8.~~ "Restimulation well" means a previously completed oil or gas well that, following  
17 completion and production of oil, has been treated with an application of fluid under  
18 pressure for the purpose of initiating or propagating fractures in a target geologic  
19 formation to enhance production of oil. The term does not include a well that:  
20 a. Has less than sixty months of production or is producing more than one hundred  
21 and twenty-five barrels of oil per day reported to the industrial commission before  
22 completion of the restimulation treatment;  
23 b. Is part of a qualifying secondary recovery project, qualifying tertiary recovery  
24 project, or stripper well or stripper well property as defined under this section; or  
25 c. Is drilled but not completed and does not have a record of oil production reported  
26 to the industrial commission.

27 ~~8-9.~~ "Royalty owner" means an owner of what is commonly known as the royalty interest  
28 and shall not include the owner of any overriding royalty or other payment carved out  
29 of the working interest.

30 ~~9-10.~~ "Stripper well" means a well drilled and completed, or re-entered and recompleted as  
31 a horizontal well, after June 30, 2013, whose average daily production of oil during any

preceding consecutive twelve-month period, excluding condensate recovered in nonassociated production, per well did not exceed ten barrels per day for wells of a depth of six thousand feet [1828.80 meters] or less, fifteen barrels per day for wells of a depth of more than six thousand feet [1828.80 meters] but not more than ten thousand feet [3048 meters], and thirty barrels per day for wells of a depth of more than ten thousand feet [3048 meters] outside the Bakken and Three Forks formations, and thirty-five barrels per day for wells of a depth of more than ten thousand feet [3048 meters] in the Bakken or Three Forks formation.

~~40-11.~~ "Stripper well property" means wells drilled and completed, or a well re-entered and recompleted as a horizontal well, before July 1, 2013, on a "property" whose average daily production of oil, excluding condensate recovered in nonassociated production, per well did not exceed ten barrels per day for wells of a depth of six thousand feet [1828.80 meters] or less, fifteen barrels per day for wells of a depth of more than six thousand feet [1828.80 meters] but not more than ten thousand feet [3048 meters], and thirty barrels per day for wells of a depth of more than ten thousand feet [3048 meters] during any preceding consecutive twelve-month period. Wells which did not actually yield or produce oil during the qualifying twelve-month period, including disposal wells, dry wells, spent wells, and shut-in wells, are not production wells for the purpose of determining whether the stripper well property exemption applies.

**SECTION 4.** A new subsection to section 57-51.1-03 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

- a. The first two hundred fifty thousand barrels of oil produced during the first thirty-six months after completion from a development incentive well drilled and completed before July 1, 2028, and certified as a qualified well by the industrial commission, are exempt from the tax under section 57-51.1-02.
- b. For purposes of the exemption under this subsection:
  - (1) An operator seeking certification of a well as a development incentive well shall meet the burden of demonstrating to the industrial commission that the well meets the criteria under subsection 2 of section 57-51.1-01.
  - (2) An operator seeking certification of a well as a development incentive well must be classified as one of the following:

- 1 (a) An operator with between forty and ninety-nine wells within the  
2 Bakken or Three Forks formations which have been:  
3 [1] Drilled by the operator during the period beginning July 1, 2023,  
4 and ending June 30, 2025; or  
5 [2] Drilled during the period beginning July 1, 2023, and ending  
6 June 30, 2025, and acquired by the operator.  
7 (b) An operator with between one hundred and one hundred forty-nine  
8 wells within the Bakken or Three Forks formations which have been:  
9 [1] Drilled by the operator during the period beginning July 1, 2023,  
10 and ending June 30, 2025; or  
11 [2] Drilled during the period beginning July 1, 2023, and ending  
12 June 30, 2025, and acquired by the operator.  
13 (c) An operator with one hundred fifty or more wells within the Bakken or  
14 Three Forks formations which have been:  
15 [1] Drilled by the operator during the period beginning July 1, 2023,  
16 and ending June 30, 2025; or  
17 [2] Drilled during the period beginning July 1, 2023, and ending  
18 June 30, 2025, and acquired by the operator.  
19 (3) The industrial commission may not certify more than:  
20 (a) Four development incentive wells for an operator classified under  
21 subparagraph a of paragraph 2 of subdivision b;  
22 (b) Eight development incentive wells for an operator classified under  
23 subparagraph b of paragraph 2 of subdivision b; and  
24 (c) Twelve development incentive wells for an operator classified under  
25 subparagraph c of paragraph 2 of subdivision b.  
26 c. The tax exemption under this subsection does not apply to a well located within  
27 the exterior boundaries of a reservation, a well located on trust properties outside  
28 reservation boundaries as defined in section 57-51.2-02, or a straddle well as  
29 defined in section 57-51.1-07.10 located on reservation trust land, unless a tribe  
30 makes an irrevocable election to opt-in to the tax exemption by providing written  
31 notice to the tax commissioner. If a tribe provides notice of its election to opt-in to

1                   the tax exemption, the tax commissioner shall apply the tax exemption beginning  
2                   in the month of production after the notice is received by the tax commissioner.

3           **SECTION 5. EFFECTIVE DATE.** This Act is effective for taxable events occurring after  
4 June 30, 2025.

5           **SECTION 6. EXPIRATION DATE.** Sections 3 and 4 of this Act are effective through  
6 June 30, 2031, and after that date are ineffective.