
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 588 (File 659, as amended by Senate "A")*

AN ACT PROHIBITING OFF-SHORE DRILLING FOR OIL AND GAS IN CONNECTICUT.

SUMMARY

This bill prohibits drilling for oil or gas, whether exploratory or otherwise, and seismic mapping in state coastal waters. Under the bill, "seismic mapping" means using sound wave technology to locate and map rocks and other geological formations that may contain oil or gas to facilitate exploring or drilling for oil or gas.

The bill also prohibits all state agencies, including the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), from issuing or approving a permit, lease, contract, or conveyance for, or relating to, drilling for oil or gas or seismic mapping in state coastal waters.

By law, no one may engage in exploratory drilling for oil or gas until DEEP adopts regulations about hydraulic fracturing ("fracking") waste. (DEEP has not adopted fracking regulations to date.) The bill's provisions apply despite this law. Thus, even if DEEP adopts fracking regulations, drilling for oil or gas in state coastal waters will still be prohibited under the bill.

*Senate Amendment "A" replaces references to state territorial waters with state coastal waters.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2019

BACKGROUND

Related Bill

SB 753 (File 56, as amended by Senate "A"), favorably reported by the Environment Committee, generally bans dealing with fracking waste, natural gas waste, or oil waste in Connecticut. It maintains existing law's exception for conducting research on small amounts of

waste, but it requires the DEEP commissioner, before approving a research request, to adopt regulations that, among other things, eliminate the exemption in the state's hazardous management regulations for drilling fluids, produced waters, and other wastes associated with exploring, developing, or producing crude oil, natural gas, or geothermal energy.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 27 Nay 2 (03/25/2019)