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ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 159—ASSEMBLYMEN WATKINS,  
SWANK AND BROOKS

PREFILED FEBRUARY 13, 2017

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JOINT SPONSOR: SENATOR RATTI

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Referred to Committee on Natural Resources,  
Agriculture, and Mining

SUMMARY—Prohibits hydraulic fracturing in this State.  
(BDR 46-593)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.  
Effect on the State: No.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

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AN ACT relating to natural resources; prohibiting hydraulic  
fracturing in this State; and providing other matters  
properly relating thereto.

**Legislative Counsel’s Digest:**

1 Existing law requires the Division of Minerals of the Commission on Mineral  
2 Resources and the Division of Environmental Protection of the State Department of  
3 Conservation and Natural Resources, jointly, to develop a hydraulic fracturing  
4 program for certain purposes in this State. The Commission is required to adopt  
5 regulations to implement the program. (NRS 522.119) If a person wishes to drill  
6 and operate an oil or gas well, including a well that is intended to be hydraulically  
7 fractured, the person must first obtain a permit from the Division of Minerals.  
8 (NRS 522.050)  
9 **Section 1** of this bill prohibits any person from engaging in hydraulic fracturing  
10 in this State, and **section 5** of this bill repeals provisions relating to the hydraulic  
11 fracturing program. **Sections 2 and 3** of this bill make conforming changes.  
12 **Section 4** of this bill provides that any permit issued by the Division of Minerals  
13 before the effective date of this bill, authorizing a person to drill and operate an oil  
14 or gas well that is or is intended to be hydraulically fractured, expires on that date.



THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN  
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1       **Section 1.** Chapter 522 of NRS is hereby amended by adding  
2 thereto a new section to read as follows:

3       *A person shall not engage in hydraulic fracturing in this State.*  
4 *As used in this section, "hydraulic fracturing" means the process*  
5 *of pumping fluid into or under the surface of the ground to create*  
6 *fractures in the rock to facilitate the production or recovery of oil*  
7 *or gas.*

8       **Sec. 2.** NRS 522.040 is hereby amended to read as follows:

9       522.040 ~~{Except as otherwise provided in NRS 522.119:}~~

10       1. The Division has jurisdiction and authority over all persons  
11 and property, public and private, necessary to effectuate the  
12 purposes and intent of this chapter.

13       2. The Division shall make investigation to determine whether  
14 waste exists or is imminent, or whether other facts exist which  
15 justify or require action by it.

16       3. The Division shall adopt regulations, make orders and take  
17 other appropriate action to effectuate the purposes of this chapter.

18       4. The Division may:

19       (a) Require:

20       (1) Identification of ownership of wells, producing leases,  
21 tanks, plants and drilling structures.

22       (2) The making and filing of reports, well logs and  
23 directional surveys. Logs of exploratory or "wildcat" wells marked  
24 "confidential" must be kept confidential for 6 months after the filing  
25 thereof, unless the owner gives written permission to release those  
26 logs at an earlier date.

27       (3) The drilling, casing and plugging of wells in such a  
28 manner as to prevent the escape of oil or gas out of one stratum into  
29 another, the intrusion of water into an oil or gas stratum, the  
30 pollution of fresh water supplies by oil, gas or salt water, and to  
31 prevent blowouts, cavings, seepages and fires.

32       (4) The furnishing of a reasonable bond with good and  
33 sufficient surety conditioned for the performance of the duty to plug  
34 each dry or abandoned well or the repair of wells causing waste.

35       (5) The operation of wells with efficient gas-oil and water-oil  
36 ratios, and to fix these ratios.

37       (6) The gauging or other measuring of oil and gas to  
38 determine the quality and quantity thereof.

39       (7) That every person who produces oil or gas in this State  
40 keep and maintain for a period of 5 years within this State complete  
41 and accurate record of the quantities thereof, which must be



1 available for examination by the Division or its agents at all  
2 reasonable times.

3 (b) Regulate, for conservation purposes:

4 (1) The drilling, producing and plugging of wells.

5 (2) The shooting and chemical treatment of wells.

6 (3) The spacing of wells.

7 (4) The disposal of salt water, nonpotable water and oil field  
8 wastes.

9 (5) The contamination or waste of underground water.

10 (c) Classify wells as oil or gas wells for purposes material to the  
11 interpretation or enforcement of this chapter.

12 **Sec. 3.** NRS 522.050 is hereby amended to read as follows:

13 522.050 1. A person shall not drill or operate an oil or gas  
14 well unless he or she first obtains a permit from the Division  
15 pursuant to this section.

16 2. Every person desiring to drill and operate an oil or gas well  
17 or requesting a change in the terms of an existing permit to drill and  
18 operate an oil or gas well must:

19 (a) Submit an application for a permit or for a request to change  
20 the terms of an existing permit, as applicable, to the Division on the  
21 form prescribed by the Division; and

22 (b) Pay the applicable fee prescribed pursuant to subsection 3.

23 3. The Commission on Mineral Resources shall prescribe by  
24 regulation the fees for a permit to drill and operate an oil or gas well  
25 and for a request to change the terms of an existing permit. The  
26 amount of each fee prescribed by the Commission may include the  
27 reasonable administrative costs of the Division relating to the filing  
28 and examination of applications for such permits or for requests for  
29 changes in the terms of such existing permits, as applicable, but the  
30 amount of the fee must not exceed:

31 (a) For a permit to drill and operate an oil or gas well , ~~that is~~  
32 ~~not intended to be hydraulically fractured,~~ \$2,000.

33 (b) For a ~~permit to drill and operate an oil or gas well that is~~  
34 ~~intended to be hydraulically fractured,~~ \$5,000.

35 ~~—(c) For a~~ request to change the terms of an existing permit to  
36 drill and operate an oil or gas well, \$400.

37 4. The Division shall, as soon as practicable after receiving the  
38 proper application and fee, issue to the person a permit or change  
39 the terms of an existing permit, as applicable, unless the drilling or  
40 operation of the well is prohibited by any law or regulation or order  
41 of the Division.

42 5. The Division shall deposit with the State Treasurer, for  
43 credit to the Account for the Division of Minerals created pursuant  
44 to NRS 513.103, all money received pursuant to subsection 2.



1     **Sec. 4.** 1. Any permit issued before the effective date of this  
2 act by the Division of Minerals of the Commission on Mineral  
3 Resources that authorizes a person to drill and operate an oil or gas  
4 well in this State that is or is intended to be hydraulically fractured  
5 expires on the effective date of this act.

6     2. As used in this section, “hydraulically fractured” has the  
7 meaning ascribed to “hydraulic fracturing” in section 1 of this act.

8     **Sec. 5.** NRS 522.0275 and 522.119 are hereby repealed.

9     **Sec. 6.** This act becomes effective upon passage and approval.

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**TEXT OF REPEALED SECTIONS**

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**522.0275 “Hydraulic fracturing” and “hydraulically fractured” defined.** “Hydraulic fracturing” or “hydraulically fractured” means the process of pumping a fluid into or under the surface of the ground to create fractures in the rock to facilitate the production or recovery of oil or gas.

**522.119 Development of program; regulations.**

1. The Division of Minerals and the Division of Environmental Protection shall, jointly, develop a hydraulic fracturing program to:

(a) Assess the effects of hydraulic fracturing on the waters of the State of Nevada;

(b) Require a person who engages in hydraulic fracturing to disclose each chemical used to engage in hydraulic fracturing; and

(c) Provide for notice to members of the general public concerning activities relating to hydraulic fracturing in this state.

2. The Commission on Mineral Resources shall adopt regulations to implement the hydraulic fracturing program required by subsection 1.

3. As used in this section, “Division of Environmental Protection” means the Division of Environmental Protection of the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

