



**Sunset Review Committee  
Testimony on the Oil & Gas Commission  
Provided by ODNR Chief of Oil & Gas Resources Management Rick Simmers  
December 7, 2015**

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Good afternoon Chairman Brown and members of the Sunset Review Committee. My name is Rick Simmers and I am the Chief of the Division of Oil & Gas Resources Management within the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR). Thank you for giving me the opportunity to present testimony on the Oil & Gas Commission for your consideration.

**Purpose of the Oil & Gas Commission**

The Oil & Gas Commission was created in 1965 to provide an administrative appeal process to any person claiming to be aggrieved, or adversely affected by an order of the Chief of the Division of Oil & Gas Resources Management. Through this appeal process, landowners, leaseholders, citizens, and oil and gas operators may seek the modification or vacation of a Chief's order. Matters considered by the Commission concern methods, practices, and impacts associated with oil and gas production, injection operations, treatment facilities and well-site reclamation. The Commission conducts administrative hearings, and renders decisions on contested issues of law and fact. Decisions of the Commission are appealable to the Court of Common Pleas from Franklin County. Additionally, the Commission mediates disputes between the state and the industry.

**Composition of the Oil & Gas Commission**

The Commission consists of five members appointed by the Governor. Each member serves a term of five years. The Commission is comprised of one public representative, one member learned and experienced in oil and gas law, one geologist, one representative of major petroleum companies, and one representative of independent petroleum operators.

**Oil & Gas Commission Summary and Recommendation**

Members of the Committee, thank you again for giving me the opportunity to testify today. The Oil & Gas Commission is a valuable tool to ODNR's Division of Oil and Gas Resources Management. For that reason, ODNR recommends that the Oil & Gas Commission be renewed by the Sunset Review Committee. In addition, the five-member makeup of the membership works effectively to meet the Commission's objectives and is representative of good governance. I would be happy to take any questions that you may have at this time.