

**Sixty-fifth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota  
In Regular Session Commencing Tuesday, January 3, 2017**

SENATE BILL NO. 2286  
(Senators Schaible, Unruh)  
(Representatives Nathe, Porter)

AN ACT to amend and reenact sections 49-22-03 and 49-22-14.1 and subsection 2 of section 49-22-16 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to energy conversion and transmission facility siting; and to provide for a legislative management study regarding the consideration of local zoning ordinances and zoning provisions during the application and public hearing process.

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

**SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 49-22-03 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

**49-22-03. Definitions.**

In this chapter, unless the context or subject matter otherwise requires:

1. "Certificate" means the certificate of site compatibility or the certificate of corridor compatibility issued under this chapter.
2. "Commission" means the North Dakota public service commission.
3. "Construction" includes any clearing of land, excavation, or other action that would affect the environment of the site after April 9, 1975, but does not include activities:
  - a. Conducted wholly within the geographic location for which a utility has previously obtained a certificate or permit under this chapter, or on which a facility was constructed before April 9, 1975, if:
    - (1) The activities are for the construction of the same type of facility as the existing type of facility as identified in a subdivision of subsections 5 or 12 of this section and the activities are:
      - (a) Within the geographic boundaries of a previously issued certificate or permit;
      - (b) For an energy conversion facility constructed before April 9, 1975, within the geographic location on which the facility was built; or
      - (c) For a transmission facility constructed before April 9, 1975, within a width of three hundred fifty feet [106.68 meters] on either side of the centerline;
    - (2) Except as provided in subdivision b, the activities do not affect any known exclusion or avoidance area;
    - (3) The activities are for the construction:
      - (a) Of a new energy conversion facility;
      - (b) Of a new gas, liquid, or electric transmission facility;
      - (c) To improve the existing energy conversion facility or gas, liquid, or electric transmission facility; or

- (d) To increase or decrease the capacity of the existing energy conversion facility or gas, liquid, or electric transmission facility; and
- (4) Before conducting any activities, the utility certifies in writing to the commission that:
  - (a) The activities will not affect any known exclusion or avoidance area;
  - (b) The activities are for the construction:
    - [1] Of a new energy conversion facility;
    - [2] Of a new gas, liquid, or electric transmission facility;
    - [3] To improve the existing energy conversion or gas, liquid, or electric transmission facility; or
    - [4] To increase or decrease the capacity of the existing energy conversion facility or gas, liquid, or electric transmission facility; and
  - (c) The utility will comply with all applicable conditions and protections in siting laws and rules and commission orders previously issued for any part of the facility.
- b. Otherwise qualifying for exclusion under subdivision a, except that the activities are expected to affect a known avoidance area and the utility before conducting any activities:
  - (1) Certifies in writing to the commission that:
    - (a) The activities will not affect any known exclusion area;
    - (b) The activities are for the construction:
      - [1] Of a new energy conversion facility;
      - [2] Of a new gas, liquid, or electric transmission facility;
      - [3] To improve the existing energy conversion facility or gas, liquid, or electric transmission facility; or
      - [4] To increase or decrease the capacity of the existing energy conversion facility or gas, liquid, or electric transmission facility; and
    - (c) The utility will comply with all applicable conditions and protections in siting laws and rules and commission orders previously issued for any part of the facility;
  - (2) Notifies the commission in writing that the activities are expected to impact an avoidance area and provides information on the specific avoidance area expected to be impacted and the reasons why impact cannot be avoided; and
  - (3) Receives the commission's written approval for the impact to the avoidance area, based on a determination that there is no reasonable alternative to the expected impact. If the commission does not approve impacting the avoidance area, the utility must obtain siting authority under this chapter for the affected portion of the site or route. If the commission fails to act on the notification required by this subdivision within thirty days of the utility's filing the notification, the impact to the avoidance area is deemed approved.
- c. Incident to preliminary engineering or environmental studies.

4. "Corridor" means the area of land in which a designated route may be established for a transmission facility.
5. "Energy conversion facility" means any plant, addition, or combination of plant and addition, designed for or capable of:
  - a. Generation by wind energy conversion exceeding one-half megawatt of electricity;
  - b. Generation by any means other than wind energy conversion exceeding fifty megawatts of electricity;
  - c. Manufacture or refinement of one hundred million cubic feet [2831684.66 cubic meters] or more of gas per day, regardless of the end use of the gas;
  - d. Manufacture or refinement of fifty thousand barrels [7949.36 cubic meters] or more of liquid hydrocarbon products per day; or
  - e. Enrichment of uranium minerals.
6. "Facility" means an energy conversion facility, transmission facility, or both.
7. "Permit" means the permit for the construction of a transmission facility within a designated corridor issued under this chapter.
8. "Person" includes any individual, firm, association, partnership, cooperative, corporation, limited liability company, or any department, agency, or instrumentality of a state or of the federal government, or any subdivision thereof.
9. "Power emergency" means an electric transmission line and associated facilities that have been damaged or destroyed by natural or manmade causes resulting in a loss of power supply to consumers of the power.
10. "Road use agreement" means permits required for extraordinary road use, road access points, approach or road crossings, public right-of-way setbacks, building rules, physical addressing, dust control measures, or road maintenance and any repair mitigation plans.
11. "Route" means the location of a transmission facility within a designated corridor.
- ~~11.~~12. "Site" means the location of an energy conversion facility.
- ~~12.~~13. "Transmission facility" means any of the following:
  - a. An electric transmission line and associated facilities with a design in excess of one hundred fifteen kilovolts. "Transmission facility" does not include:
    - (1) A temporary transmission line loop that is:
      - (a) Connected and adjacent to an existing transmission facility that was sited under this chapter;
      - (b) Within the corridor of the sited facility and does not cross known exclusion or avoidance areas; and
      - (c) In place for less than one year; or
    - (2) A transmission line that is less than one mile [1.61 kilometers] long.
  - b. A gas or liquid transmission line and associated facilities designed for or capable of transporting coal, gas, liquid hydrocarbons, liquid hydrocarbon products, or carbon dioxide. This subdivision does not apply to:

- (1) An oil or gas pipeline gathering system;
- (2) A pipeline with an outside diameter of four and one-half inches [11.43 centimeters] or less that will not be trenched and will be plowed in with a power mechanism having a vertical knife or horizontally directionally drilled, and its associated facilities; or
- (3) A pipeline that is less than one mile [1.61 kilometers] long.

For purposes of this chapter, a gathering system includes the pipelines and associated facilities used to collect oil from the lease site to the first pipeline storage site where pressure is increased for further transport, or pipelines and associated facilities used to collect gas from the well to the gas processing facility at which end-use consumer-quality gas is produced, with or without the addition of odorant.

- c. A liquid transmission line and associated facilities designed for or capable of transporting water from or to an energy conversion facility.

~~13-14.~~ "Utility" means any person engaged in and controlling the generation, manufacture, refinement, or transmission of electric energy, gas, liquid hydrocarbons, or liquid hydrocarbon products, including electric power generation or transmission, coal gasification, coal liquefaction, petroleum refinement, uranium enrichment, and the transmission of coal, gas, liquid hydrocarbons, or liquid hydrocarbon products, or the transmission of water from or to any energy conversion facility.

**SECTION 2. AMENDMENT.** Section 49-22-14.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

**49-22-14.1. Cooperation with state and federal agencies and political subdivisions.**

The commission may, and is encouraged to, cooperate with and receive and exchange technical information and assistance from and with any department, agency, or officer of any state or of the federal government to eliminate duplication of effort, to establish a common database, or for any other purpose relating to the provisions of this chapter and in furtherance of the statement of policy contained herein. The commission shall cooperate and exchange technical information with directly impacted political subdivisions as outlined in subsection 2 of 49-22-16.

**SECTION 3. AMENDMENT.** Subsection 2 of section 49-22-16 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

2.
  - a. A certificate of site compatibility for an energy conversion facility ~~shall~~may not supersede or preempt any local land use, zoning, or building rules, regulations, or ordinances and no site ~~shall~~may be designated which violates local land use, zoning, or building rules, regulations, or ordinances. A
  - b. Except as provided in this section, a permit for the construction of a gas or liquid transmission facility within a designated corridor may supersede and preempt any local land use, ~~or zoning, or building rules, regulations, or ordinances upon a finding by the commission that such rules, regulations, or ordinances, as applied to the proposed route,~~
  - c. Before a gas or liquid transmission facility is approved, the commission shall require the applicant to comply with the road use agreements of the impacted political subdivision. A permit may supersede and preempt the requirements of a political subdivision if the applicant shows by a preponderance of the evidence the regulations or ordinances are unreasonably restrictive in view of existing technology, factors of cost or economics, or needs of consumers regardless of their location, or are in direct conflict with state or federal laws or rules. Without such a finding by the commission, no route shall be

~~designated which violates local land use, zoning, or building rules, regulations, or ordinances.~~

- d. When an application for a certificate for a gas or liquid transmission facility is filed, the commission shall notify the townships with retained zoning authority, cities, and counties in which any part of the proposed corridor is located. The commission may not schedule a public hearing sooner than forty-five days from the date notification is sent by mail or electronic mail. Upon notification, a political subdivision shall provide a listing to the commission of all local requirements identified under this subsection. The requirements must be filed at least ten days before the hearing or the requirements are superseded and preempted.
- e. An applicant shall comply with all local requirements provided to the commission pursuant to subdivision d, which are not otherwise superseded by the commission.

**SECTION 4. LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT STUDY - COOPERATION BETWEEN THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION AND POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS.** During the 2017-18 interim, the legislative management shall study cooperation and communication between the public service commission and political subdivisions in regard to ensuring local ordinances and zoning provisions are considered and addressed as part of the application and public hearing process. The study must include examination of the impacts on relationships between landowners and the oil and gas industry; impacts on the efficiency of the siting process, including timelines associated with notification and permitting; impacts on the public input process; and impacts on compliance with, and enforcement of, political subdivision zoning ordinances. The legislative management shall report its findings and recommendations, together with any legislation required to implement the recommendations, to the sixty-sixth legislative assembly.

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President of the Senate

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Speaker of the House

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Secretary of the Senate

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Chief Clerk of the House

This certifies that the within bill originated in the Senate of the Sixty-fifth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota and is known on the records of that body as Senate Bill No. 2286.

Senate Vote:    Yeas 47            Nays 0            Absent 0

House Vote:    Yeas 92            Nays 0            Absent 2

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Secretary of the Senate

Received by the Governor at \_\_\_\_\_ M. on \_\_\_\_\_, 2017.

Approved at \_\_\_\_\_ M. on \_\_\_\_\_, 2017.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Governor

Filed in this office this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2017,

at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock \_\_\_\_\_ M.

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Secretary of State