
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 252 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY BOBACK, SANTARSIERO, DAVIS, BROWNLEE, HARKINS,
COHEN, MILLARD, STURLA, MURT, CARROLL, CONKLIN, GINGRICH,
HELM, HENNESSEY, D. COSTA, PASHINSKI, DEAN AND HARPER,
FEBRUARY 3, 2015

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, FEBRUARY 3, 2015

AN ACT

1 Providing for a health registry for the collection of health-
2 related data associated with unconventional gas well
3 drilling; imposing duties on the Department of Health; and
4 providing for funding.

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
6 hereby enacts as follows:

7 Section 1. Short title.

8 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Marcellus
9 Shale Health Registry Act.

10 Section 2. Purpose.

11 The purpose of this act is to assess and evaluate the
12 potential adverse health consequences associated with the
13 drilling of unconventional gas wells in this Commonwealth.

14 Section 3. Definitions.

15 "Department." The Department of Health of the Commonwealth.

16 "Health care practitioner." As defined in section 103 of the
17 act of July 19, 1979 (P.L.130, No.48), known as the Health Care
18 Facilities Act.

1 "Unconventional formation." A geological shale formation
2 existing below the base of the Elk Sandstone or its geologic
3 equivalent stratigraphic interval where natural gas generally
4 cannot be produced at economic flow rates or in economic volumes
5 except by vertical or horizontal well bores stimulated by
6 hydraulic fracture treatments or by using multilateral well
7 bores or other techniques to expose more of the formation to the
8 well bore.

9 "Unconventional gas well." A bore hole drilled or being
10 drilled for the purpose of or to be used for the production of
11 natural gas from an unconventional formation.

12 Section 4. Establishment of health registry.

13 The department shall establish, by January 1, 2016, a
14 population-based health registry for the collection of health-
15 related data associated with unconventional gas well drilling.
16 The registry shall consist of health-related data collected and
17 provided by health care practitioners.

18 Section 5. Reporting by health care practitioner.

19 All cases of health concerns, which have been diagnosed or
20 treated by a health care practitioner, that may be associated
21 with unconventional gas well operations must be reported to the
22 department on forms furnished by the department or through the
23 use of a health information exchange.

24 Section 6. Confidentiality.

25 Information regarding patient identity received by the
26 department shall be kept confidential and shall not be subject
27 to the act of February 14, 2008 (P.L.6, No.3), known as the
28 Right-to-Know Law. The department shall at all times respect the
29 privacy of patients and patient records, which shall be subject
30 to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of

1 1996 (Public Law 104-191, 110 Stat. 1936).

2 Section 7. Regulations.

3 The department shall promulgate regulations necessary to
4 carry out this act within six months of the effective date of
5 this section.

6 Section 8. Funding.

7 From fees collected under 58 Pa.C.S. § 2314 (relating to
8 distribution of fee) and deposited in the Unconventional Gas
9 Well Fund for 2015 and each year thereafter, \$1,000,000 shall be
10 distributed to the department to carry out the provisions of
11 this act.

12 Section 9. Effective date.

13 This act shall take effect immediately.