

# Alaska State Legislature

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## Representative Vic Kohring District 14

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## **Kohring Seeks to Streamline Gas Drilling** **Separating Gas from Oil Should Make Permitting Easier**

(JUNEAU) – Rep. Vic Kohring (R-Wasilla) introduced a bill to the House Oil and Gas Committee this morning to streamline the permitting process for drilling shallow wells for methane deposits in coal beds. The Representative said those types of wells are much simpler than North Slope oil wells and therefore should face less complicated regulation. Kohring said shallow methane wells, such as those near Wasilla, reach hundreds of feet while North Slope oil wells can travel for miles.

“It’s basically an apples to oranges comparison,” Kohring said. “The small operators should not be subjected to the same strict requirements that the operators on the North Slope are, and for good reason. The North Slope has much more complicated, more difficult types of wells to drill.”

House Bill 69 would permit a shallow natural gas well application to bypass drilling regulations that do not apply to such wells. Kohring estimates the approval time for shallow well applications to change from one or two years to 30 to 60 days. If the legislation becomes law, it will be effective immediately.

“Time is money and there’s cost involved in getting documents filled out and filled out correctly,” Kohring said. “It’s a time issue, a cost issue, and a convenience issue and I think if we can streamline those three areas it’s going to make it much easier for more development in Alaska, at least in the natural gas industry.”

Kohring said an easier application process should encourage more small natural gas operators to drill in Alaska.

“I see that it’s going to encourage more operators to come to the state and apply for well permits and be issued those permits,” Kohring said. “It’s going to result in more drilling and it’s going to be a shot in the arm economically to our state.”

Upon approval by the Oil and Gas Committee, House Bill 69 will travel to the House Resources Committee.

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