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Representative Vic Kohring District 14

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House Approves Gas Drilling Amendments **Drilling Shallow Gas Wells Will Be Easier With Adjustments**

(JUNEAU) – The House of Representatives passed [House Bill 69](#) by a vote of 37 to zero today. Rep. Vic Kohring (R-Wasilla) said the bill will streamline the permitting process for drilling shallow wells for methane deposits in coal beds. Kohring said the natural gas wells, such as those near Wasilla, reach hundreds of feet while North Slope oil wells can travel for miles. He said the shallow gas wells should bypass drilling regulations that only apply to the deeper oil wells.

“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.”

Kohring estimates the approval time for shallow well applications to change from one or two years to 30 to 60 days. Kohring said a faster and 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.”

HB 69 was first heard in the House Special Committee on Oil and Gas last Thursday, less than a week ago.

“I’m please with how promptly this bill moved through the House,” Kohring said. “I hope to see similar results in the Senate.”

HB 69 moves on to the Senate. If HB 69 becomes law, it will be effective immediately.

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Broadcasters note: Comments are available on the Majority Actuality Line 1-800-478-6540, or on the Majority webpage at www.akrepublicans.org.