

Department of Planning and Budget
2025 General Assembly Session
State Fiscal Impact Statement

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ORIGINAL

Bill Number: SB969

Patron: Stuart

Bill Title: Mineral Mine Safety Act; definition of "surface mineral mine"; mine inspectors; certificate renewal; use of cyanide or cyanide compound.

Bill Summary: Amends the definition of "surface mineral mine" in the Mineral Mine Safety Act to exclude excavation or grading when conducted solely in aid of onsite farming or construction and under certain conditions enumerated in the bill. The bill amends the definition of "mining" in existing law, relating to the exemption from permits for a mining operation, to extend the required completion time from six months to one year for excavation or grading conducted to construct or expand a farm pond for agricultural irrigation or provision of water for livestock. The bill also amends the qualification requirements for mineral mine inspectors, removes references to the defunct Board of Mineral Mining Examiners, and prohibits the issuance of any permit for a mineral mining or processing operation that includes the use of cyanide or a cyanide compound.

Budget Amendment Necessary: No.

Items Impacted: None.

Explanation: This bill involves the Department of Energy; however, no budget action is required. See Fiscal Analysis section, below.

Fiscal Summary: It is anticipated that any fiscal impact to the Department of Energy can be absorbed within current resources.

Fiscal Analysis: This bill contains three changes to the Mineral Mine Safety Act, which regulates mineral mining. The first clarifies that excavation or grading related to farming and the construction of certain farm ponds are not mining operations. The second would prohibit the department from issuing a permit for a mining operation planning to use cyanide. Neither are anticipated to result in a fiscal impact to Energy.

The third portion of this bill changes the qualification requirements for mine inspectors. The current law sets out requirements of a minimum age (25), "good moral character and temperate habits," and a certification as a mine foreman. The bill would replace these with "qualifications as determined by the Director." The bill would also eliminate the requirement for mine inspectors to take an exam every five years to renew their certification and removes references to the "Board of Mineral Mining Examiners" which was dissolved in 2012. It is anticipated that the department will be able to develop qualifications for the position with existing resources, and that implementation will not result in a fiscal impact. The exam fee is \$10; any lost revenue can

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be absorbed by the agency. This impact statement is preliminary and may be updated if additional information becomes available.

Other: This bill is the companion to HB1887.