

Eminent domain bill killed; ethics complaint on lobbyist considered

Written by Marianne Goodland

The Colorado House last week voted to kill Senate Bill 14-093, which would have granted eminent domain rights to oil pipeline companies. The House's action came at the request of the bill's sponsor, Rep. Jenise May (D-Aurora), who asked that the bill be "laid over" to May 9, two days after the 2014 session concludes. It's a procedural move that ends any further action on the bill.

It's unclear whether SB 93's supporters will get another chance to get another bill on the issue introduced with just 30 days left in the 2014 session.

However, the bill's industry sponsor may have another problem to deal with: the possibility of an ethics complaint lodged against him for threatening political retaliation against a House member who worked to kill the bill.

SB 93 would have overturned a 2012 Colorado Supreme Court decision that ruled that oil pipeline companies did not have the right to take private land for purposes of placing petroleum pipelines. The bill passed the Senate Feb. 27 with a 24-10 vote; the "no" votes included Sen. Greg Brophy (R-Yuma).

On March 13, SB 93 squeaked through the House Judiciary Committee on a 6-5 vote, but with three of the six who voted "yes" stating they wanted to see the bill further amended on the issue of local government control. SB 93 was scheduled for second reading debate in the House on April 4.

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