

PROCLAMATION
BY THE
Governor of the State of Texas

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14, of the Texas Constitution, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto House Bill No. 3291 as passed by the Eighty-Fourth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, because of the following objections:

Theft of oil and gas is a serious problem facing one of our state's most vital industries. Those responsible should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. I support increasing the criminal penalties for these crimes. And I support providing prosecutors with new tools targeted at theft of oil and gas.

House Bill 3291 shares these goals, but unfortunately its overly broad language creates severe criminal penalties for conduct that may have nothing to do with theft of oil and gas. For example, the bill would make it a second-degree felony to possess, purchase, or sell oil or gas without the proper Railroad Commission permit. Under current law, such a violation results only in a civil fine – like most other violations of state permitting rules. But under House Bill 3291, the penalty for not having the appropriate Railroad Commission paperwork could be as much as 20 years in prison. And because the crime created by the bill requires only a reckless mental state, a felony conviction could be obtained even if the defendant did not know his paperwork was out of order. Turning paperwork errors into felonies is not the right solution to the very real problem of oil and gas theft.

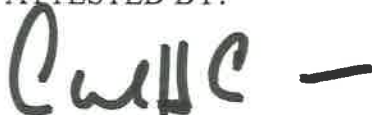
Since the Eighty-Fourth Texas Legislature, Regular Session, by its adjournment has prevented the return of this bill, I am filing these objections in the office of the Secretary of State and giving notice thereof by this public proclamation according to the aforementioned constitutional provision.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this 18th day of June, 2015.


GREG ABBOTT
Governor of Texas

ATTESTED BY:



CARLOS CASCOS
Secretary of State

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY OF STATE
O'CLOCK

JUN 18 2015