

North Dakota Workforce Needs-Assessment Results and 2007 Oil and Gas Industry Legislation

Ron Ness¹

North Dakota has recently completed an oil industry Workforce Needs Assessment. The survey of oil industry firms provided a detailed analysis of the industry's workforce now and in the next five years. The state now has the most complete oil industry workforce needs data in the Rocky Mountains and maybe the United States. This information will be critical as the industry attempts to fill current job openings and replace the large number of workers retiring in the near future. The data are also essential as industry, government, and community colleges determine what training programs are needed to prepare a skilled workforce for the future. Ron Ness will review the study results and discuss other actions to recruit workers and develop workforce training programs that are taking place in the Williston Basin and Rocky Mountain Region.

Ness will also provide a recap of key oil and gas industry legislation in North Dakota. The industry was successful in passing several pieces of legislation in 2007 to help address the Crude Oil Transportation Bottleneck and attract oil and gas investment to the state.

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Ron Ness is President of the North Dakota Petroleum Council. His primary function is governmental relations in North Dakota, South Dakota, and the Rocky Mountain Region. He serves as the industry spokesperson and manages the association.

Ron was previously the President of the North Dakota Retail and Petroleum Marketers Associations. Prior to that, he spent ten years with the state of North Dakota as the Deputy Commissioner of Labor and as a Compliance Officer with the State Tax Department.

A Tolna, North Dakota native, Ron graduated from North Dakota State University and received his Masters in Management from the University of Mary.

Ron was appointed by Governor Hoeven to the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission and the Oil and Gas Research Council. He and his wife have three young children and live in Bismarck. Email: ronness@ndoil.org