

NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT (EXCERPT)
Act 451 of 1994

324.20132 Covenant not to sue generally; future enforcement action.

Sec. 20132. (1) The state may provide a person with a covenant not to sue concerning any liability to the state under this part, including future liability, resulting from a release or threatened release addressed by response activities, whether that action is on a facility or off a facility, if each of the following is met:

- (a) The covenant not to sue is in the public interest.
- (b) The covenant not to sue would expedite response activity consistent with rules promulgated under this part.
- (c) There is full compliance with a consent order under this part for response to the release or threatened release concerned.

(d) The response activity has been approved by the department.

(2) The state shall provide a person, to which the department is authorized under subsection (1) to issue a covenant not to sue for the portion of response activity described in subdivision (a) or (b), with a covenant not to sue with respect to future liability to the state under this part for a future release or threatened release, and a person provided the covenant not to sue is not liable to the state under section 20126 with respect to that release or threatened release at a future time. The portion of response activity to which the covenant not to sue pertains is either of the following:

(a) The transport and secure disposition off site of hazardous substances in a facility meeting the requirements of sections 3004(c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (m), (o), (p), (u), and (v) and 3005(c) of subtitle C of the solid waste disposal act, title II of Public Law 89-272, 42 U.S.C. 6924 and 6925, if the department has required off-site disposition and has rejected proposed remedial action that is consistent with the rules promulgated under this part and that does not include off-site disposition.

(b) The treatment of hazardous substances so as to destroy, eliminate, or permanently immobilize the hazardous constituents of the substances, so that, in the judgment of the department, the substances no longer present any current or currently foreseeable future significant risk to the public health, safety, or welfare, or the environment; no by-product of the treatment or destruction process presents any significant hazard to the public health, safety, or welfare, or the environment; and all by-products are themselves treated, destroyed, or contained in a manner that assures that the by-products do not present any current or currently foreseeable future significant risk to the public health, safety, or welfare, or the environment.

(3) A covenant not to sue concerning future liability to the state shall not take effect until the department certifies that remedial action has been completed in accordance with the requirements of this part at the facility that is the subject of the covenant.

(4) In assessing the appropriateness of a covenant not to sue granted under subsection (1) and any condition to be included in a covenant not to sue under subsection (1) or (2), the state shall consider whether the covenant or condition is in the public interest on the basis of factors such as the following:

- (a) The effectiveness and reliability of the remedial action, in light of the other alternative remedial actions considered for the facility concerned.
- (b) The nature of the risks remaining at the facility.
- (c) The extent to which performance standards are included in the consent order.
- (d) The extent to which the response activity provides a complete remedy for the facility, including a reduction in the hazardous nature of the substances at the facility.
- (e) The extent to which the technology used in the response activity is demonstrated to be effective.
- (f) Whether the fund or other sources of funding would be available for any additional response activities that might eventually be necessary at the facility.
- (g) Whether response activity will be carried out, in whole or in significant part, by persons who are liable under section 20126.

(5) A covenant not to sue under this section is subject to the satisfactory performance by a person of his or her obligations under the agreement concerned.

(6) Except for the portion of the remedial action that is subject to a covenant not to sue under subsection (2), a covenant not to sue a person concerning future liability to the state shall include an exception to the covenant that allows the state to sue that person concerning future liability resulting from the release or threatened release that is the subject of the covenant if the liability arises out of conditions that are unknown at the time the department certifies under subsection (3) that remedial action has been completed at the facility concerned.

(7) In extraordinary circumstances, the state may determine, after assessment of relevant factors such as those referred to in subsection (4) and volume, toxicity, mobility, strength of evidence, ability to pay,

litigative risks, public interest considerations, precedential value, and inequities and aggravating factors, not to include the exception in subsection (6) if other terms, conditions, or requirements of the agreement containing the covenant not to sue are sufficient to provide all reasonable assurances that the public health and the environment will be protected from any future releases at or from the facility.

(8) The state may include any provisions providing for future enforcement action under section 20119 or 20137 that in the discretion of the department are necessary and appropriate to assure protection of the public health, safety, welfare, and the environment.

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Popular name: Environmental Remediation

Popular name: Environmental Response Act

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