

**STATE BOARD OF REGISTRATION FOR PROFESSIONAL  
ENGINEERS AND SURVEYORS**

77 South High Street, 24<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
614-466-3651 <http://peps.ohio.gov>

**TESTIMONY**  
**2024-2025 BIENNIAL OPERATING BUDGET**  
**AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**  
April 26, 2023

Chairman Schaffer and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding the fiscal year 2024-2025 operating budget and to address any questions you may have. I am John F. Greenhalge, Executive Director for the State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Surveyors.

**Board Overview**

The Board's mission is to safeguard the health, safety, property, and welfare of the citizens of Ohio by providing effective licensure and regulation of professional engineers, professional surveyors, and firms offering engineering and surveying services in Ohio. This is accomplished by ensuring that only qualified individuals and firms are licensed to practice engineering and surveying in Ohio and ensuring that Ohio's laws and rules governing the practice of engineering and surveying are followed. The Board is able to ensure that only qualified individuals are licensed to practice engineering and surveying by requiring national standards in education, examinations, and supervised engineering and surveying experience that demonstrates that the applicant is qualified to be placed in responsible charge of engineering and surveying work. The Board is also responsible for investigating complaints alleging violations of the practice act as well as complaints involving illegal practice by unqualified and unlicensed individuals and firms.

The Board accomplishes its mission and provides excellent customer service through its five Board members appointed by the Governor and seven full-time staff members. Currently the Board has one vacant staff position. The current staffing level of the Board ensures that the Board has the requisite technical knowledge and expertise to evaluate applications and investigate violations of the registration act.

The Board licenses more than 30,000 professional engineers and professional surveyors and firms, that design Ohio's roads, bridges and highways, design and maintain our power grid and power plants, design our homes, skyscrapers, schools, churches and commercial buildings, establish our property boundaries and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data, inspect our waterways and ensures the safety of our drinking water.

The Board administers examinations and licenses individuals in the following engineering disciplines: agricultural, architectural, chemical, civil, control systems, electrical and computer, environmental, fire protection, industrial, mechanical, metallurgical and materials, mining and mineral processing, naval architecture, nuclear, petroleum, structural and surveying. The state of Ohio has more than 20 accredited colleges and universities that offer engineering and surveying programs leading to professional licensure. The Board and its staff work closely with Ohio's 20+ accredited colleges and universities offering engineering and surveying programs to prepare their graduates for successful transition into the fields of engineering and surveying.

#### **Accomplishments during the 2022/2023 biennium**

- The Board constantly works with the other engineering and surveying boards through its association with the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying, an association made up of all engineering and surveying boards in the U.S. and its territories, to develop national model laws and standards to facilitate licensure mobility across jurisdictions.
- The Board convened a task force to study the surveying profession and look for ways to broaden opportunities for individuals to enter the surveying profession. In January 2021, the Board adopted the task force's recommendations and implemented changes that allows part-time experience and recognized overlapping engineering and surveying experience that will reduce the number of years it takes to become a licensed professional engineer and professional surveyor. The Board also created an additional education pathway for college graduates. These changes will create more opportunities for licensees pursuing surveying registration and elected county engineer positions in Ohio. Even though the changes have only

been in effect for 24 months, the Board has seen a significant increase in the number of professional surveyor applicants.

- In October 2022, the Board also streamlined the professional engineer applications to allow applicants to test early and eliminated the requirement for multiple applications and fees. Allowing students to test early and streamlining the application process will result in a faster, more efficient application process and encourage more engineering students to pursue registration.

### **Board Priorities for FY 2024 and 2025**

- Continue to provide excellent and responsive customer service to the public, our licensees and applicants for licensure.
- Continue to provide timely processing and evaluation of licensure applications to ensure that applicants have the requisite education, experience and exams.
- Investigate and adjudicate complaints alleging violations of the practice act.
- Continue the Board's program focused on educating the public and licensees on the examination and licensure process and the laws and rules regulating the professions of engineering and surveying. The Board implemented this program many years ago to increase awareness of the Board's laws and rules and reduce the number of violations.

### **Executive Budget Recommendation**

The Board receives no GRF; the Board is entirely supported by our fees. The Board's biennial renewal fee of \$40.00 is currently the second lowest registration fee of engineering and surveying boards in the United States and the Board's fees are among the lowest in the U.S. The Engineers and Surveyors Board is able to keep its expenses low by implementing strict cost controls and utilizing the shared services of the Office of Budget and Management's fiscal office and the Department of Administrative Services [DAS] Information Technology Division to provide the Board with human resources, payroll and fiscal, IT, internet service and telecommunications support.

During the 2024/2025 biennium the Board does expect increases in costs related to employee payroll and benefits as provided in the union contract, IT, rent and other support services provided by DAS. Costs associated with the eLicense database are also expected to increase.

The Executive Budget proposal for the Board is \$1,233,994 for fiscal year 2024 and \$1,281,904 for Fiscal Year 2025, totaling \$2,515,898 for the biennium.

The Board believes that the funding recommendation proposed in the Executive Budget for fiscal years 2024 and 2025 will permit the Board to maintain its current level of service and fulfill its mission to the citizens of Ohio.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding the Board's budget recommendation. At this time, I would like to answer any questions you have.