



County Engineers Association of Ohio

Senate Finance Committee

Patrick Ginnetti, P.E., P.S.

Mahoning County Engineer & Vice President of the County Engineers Association of Ohio Board

June 8, 2023

Dear Chairman Dolan, Vice Chairman Cirino, Ranking Minority Member Sykes and all members of the Senate Finance Committee:

I am Patrick Ginnetti, P.E., P.S., Mahoning County Engineer and currently severing as the Vice President of County Engineers Association of Ohio (CEAO). Thank you for the opportunity to speak on Sub. House Bill 33 – specifically: LOCCD33 County engineer qualifications (CEAO Opposes)

LOCCD33 County engineer qualifications – Oppose

Dual Registration requirements for County Engineers is already a cost-saving measure for Ohio local governments.

Ohio counties combine the positions of County Engineer and County Surveyor, which other states have as separate offices, into a requirement that the County Engineer have active dual licenses. This saves Ohio local governments significant dollars annually.

Nearly half of all Ohio counties have a County Engineer on staff with no other licensed professional surveyor or one surveyor nearing retirement age with no plans to replace the position. Elimination of the requirement would mean the addition of a position in those areas.

Dual Registration help ensure that engineers elected as county engineers have the appropriate professional education and experience.

Ohio does not license engineers with separate licensure designations. In Ohio, a “Professional Engineer” can hold degrees and an engineering license as a chemical, electrical, nuclear, mechanical, aeronautical or other area of specialization.

Dual registration as a Professional Engineer and Professional Surveyor is ONLY available to engineers who meet the requirements as a CIVIL engineer. This qualification helps protect the public with the guarantee that the individual ultimately responsible for county roadways, bridges, drainage and other civil engineering matters has the correct education, experience and licensure for those duties.

Ohio Revised Code contains no less than 17 separate sections relating to surveying, all duties for which a county agency must ultimately be responsible.

Duties required of the County Engineer that contain a mandatory surveying component include road construction, property mapping and maintenance of the County Tax Map boundary data, monumentation of county sections, creation and recording of maps and property line changes.

Provide mapping support for other agencies: airports, law enforcement, prosecutors’ offices, 911 data, etc.

Ohio is Seeing a Significant Increase in the Number of Surveyor Applicants

CEAO participated in a recent task force convened to study the surveying profession and look for ways to broaden

opportunities for individuals to enter the surveying profession. In January 2021 the State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Surveyors 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 have created 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. 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, including applicants pursuing dual licensure as a professional engineer and professional surveyor.

CEAO's ASK: This issue is worthy of a thoughtful discussion, not rushed in a budget bill. We respectfully ask to remove the language and CEAO commits to working to pass legislation addressing legislative concerns without sacrificing the safety and cost local taxpayers more money.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY
2024-2025 OPERATING BUDGET
SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE
June 8, 2023

Dear Chairman Dolan, Vice Chairman Cirino, Ranking Minority Member Sykes and all members of the Senate Finance Committee:

I am John Greenhalge, Executive Director of the State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Surveyors and I am writing on behalf of the Board to express the Board's concern about language in the 2024-2025 state budget bill [HB 33] that would eliminate the requirement that elected county engineers possess registration as both a professional engineer and professional surveyor. The Board is the state agency that licenses professional engineers and professional surveyors and regulates the professions of engineering and surveying in Ohio. Due to the nature of their work, there are no other professions that impact the health, safety and welfare of the public more than professional engineers and professional surveyors.

The Board is deeply concerned with the proposed change for the following reasons:

1. Jeopardizes the Safety of the Traveling Public

In accordance with Ohio law the elected county engineer reviews, approves and monitors construction on all county roadways, bridges and culverts and is responsible for overseeing county property records. In order to perform these duties prescribed in Ohio law, and protect the public, the county engineer must have the knowledge, skills and abilities of both a professional engineer and surveyor and must be able to exercise responsible charge of both the engineering and surveying work performed in the county to ensure that engineering and surveying work is performed safely. In order to perform the duties of the elected county engineer prescribed in Ohio law the county engineer must:

- Have the engineering and surveying knowledge and expertise to review and to change, reject, or approve the proposed work, the work in progress and the final work product, through a continuous process of examination, evaluation, communication, and direction throughout the development of the work.
- Be in direct supervisory control and have personal professional knowledge of the engineering/surveying work product and be able to supervise and direct other design professionals and/or support staff working on engineering and surveying projects.

2. Increase Cost to Counties

Eliminating the requirement that the elected county engineer is registered as both a professional engineer and professional surveyor may result in the requirement that counties hire a separate professional engineer and professional surveyor to oversee and supervise the engineering and surveying work performed in the county. Removing the requirement for the county engineer to be a professional surveyor would result in counties needing to hire a full-time surveyor to oversee the numerous surveying functions performed by the county. Professional surveyors are highly trained and educated professionals that are highly sought after and are demanding increased salaries. Only the largest counties would likely be able to afford the pay and benefits for two individuals to oversee the engineering and surveying work performed in the county.

3. Ohio is Seeing a Significant Increase in the Number of Surveyor Applicants

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 have created 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, including applicants pursuing dual licensure as a professional engineer and professional surveyor.

Number of PS Exams Administered by the Board 2020 – Present:

2020		2021		2022	
EXAM DATE	EXAMINEES	EXAM DATE	EXAMINEES	EXAM DATE	EXAMINEES
AUG 2020	9	MAR 2021	8	MAR 2022	9
NOV 2020	13	JUN 2021	10	JUN 2022	13
TOTAL	22	SEP 2021	6	SEP 2022	11
		DEC 2021	8	DEC 2022	14
		TOTAL	32	TOTAL	47

2023	
EXAM DATE	EXAMINEES
MAR 2023	17
JUN 2023	20 ¹
SEP 2023	TBD
DEC 2023	TBD
TOTAL	37+

¹The Board is still accepting registration for the June 2023 surveying exam. More than 30 applicants are eligible at this time.

Maintaining the requirement that the elected county engineer possess both professional engineer and professional surveyor registration is essential to protecting the public. Much like the requirement that a county prosecutor is licensed to practice law, the requirement that the county engineer possess both a professional engineer and a professional surveyor license is essential to ensure that the work performed for the public is being performed safely and within accepted standards of practice.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony.

John Greenhalge, Executive Director
State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Surveyors