

STATE BOARD OF REGISTRATION FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS AND SURVEYORS

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

TESTIMONY 2026-2027 BIENNIAL OPERATING BUDGET FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION February 5, 2025

Chairman Willis and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding the fiscal year 2026-2027 operating budget and to address any questions you may have. I am John F. Greenhalge, Executive Director of 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 eight full-time staff members. 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 2024/2025 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 comprised 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.
- In 2024, the Board completed the Occupational Licensure Review and received no recommendations or changes.
- The Board is continuing to streamline the professional engineer applications to allow applicants to test early and eliminate 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 2026 and 2027

- Continue to provide excellent and responsive customer service to the public, our licensees and applicants for licensure.
- Continue to work with the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying [NCEES] and the other 69 engineering and surveying boards in the U.S. to promote and facilitate licensure mobility for professional engineers and professional surveyors.
- 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 2026/2027 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 \$1,378,866 for fiscal year 2026 and \$1,465,930 for Fiscal Year 2027, totaling \$2,844,796 for the biennium.

The Board believes that the funding recommendation proposed in the Executive Budget for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 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.