

**The testimony of**  
**Jeff Kennedy, PE, Past President**  
**Ohio Society of Professional Engineers**

**Presented to**  
**Senate General Government and Agency Review Committee,**  
**Senator Kirk Schuring, Chair**

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**Date**  
**November 18, 2020**

**Regarding**  
**Senate Bill 246 (Occupational Licensing of Out-of-State Licenses)**

Chair Schuring, Vice Chair Rulli, Ranking Member O'Brien, and members of the General Government and Agency Review Committee, thank you for again allowing me to testify today on the -7 version of Substitute Senate Bill 246, which would require occupational licensing of out-of-state licensees.

My name is Jeff Kennedy, PE, and I am a past president of the Ohio Society of Professional Engineers (OSPE), and I have also previously served as OSPE's vice president of legislative and governmental affairs. After graduating from Purdue University in 1983 with a bachelors of science degree in civil engineering, I have practiced civil engineering since 1985, and became a licensed professional engineer in 1990 in Indiana and since 1993 here in Ohio. For the entirety of my career in Ohio, I have been employed with the consulting civil engineering and surveying firm of Shaffer, Johnston, Lichtenwalter & Associates, Inc., a company founded in 1952 with offices in Mansfield and Wooster, Ohio, and still located in those two cities. Since 2009, I have been its president. Our work includes the design and project management of a variety of civil engineering and land surveying projects for private citizens, property developers, municipalities, townships, counties and the state of Ohio.

I last spoke with this committee on February 19<sup>th</sup> of this year and I am testifying again today on behalf of OSPE – the single, most powerful voice representing individual licensed professional engineers. Since then, together with our coalition of like-minded engineering associations, the Ohio Society of Professional Engineers has met with this legislation's sponsors and other key legislators or their aides to draft language to resolve our concerns.

We are pleased that the substitute legislation reflects our request for the necessary work experience, formal education and successful completion of a national examination, authored by

the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES). We look forward to working with the sponsors to resolve some remaining issues that concern us:

- First, although 45 states is a large majority of the states of this Union, the national standard is not set by the policies of those states. Rather, the national standard for professional engineers is set by the NCEES.
- Second, we are concerned with the situation where an out-of-state applicant may not meet the current Ohio standard but does meet the less restrictive standard of the substitute legislation. In such a case, we prefer to see the higher Ohio standard maintained, rather than a lower standard. Our message remains that Ohio citizens are benefitted by the law of this State requiring minimum national standards for formal education, for work experience under the mentorship of a professional engineer, and for passing the NCEES national examination.
- Third, Substitute Senate Bill 246-7 makes no provision for foreign engineering degree applicants. Engineers from other countries frequently have different requirements for education and experience. OSPE believes Ohio's professional engineering licensure should continue to hold to the rigorous NCEES national standard for formal education, work experience and examination. Private citizens are not the only purchasers of goods and services produced by professional engineers, local and state government do so as well. And only some of those decisions are made by elected officials. Public contracts for bridges, buildings, drinking water projects, sewage treatment, dams and environmental remediation projects are frequently made by other state officials and must keep to the higher Ohio standard.

Given these issues above, OSPE would suggest a minor amendment that still maintains the spirit of the law being sought by the bill sponsors. In line 16891 of Substitute Senate Bill 246-7, following "... or has satisfactory work experience," we suggest the insertion of "education, has passed the necessary licensure examination, or has ....". With this minor adjustment OSPE can support the bill.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak once again on behalf of the Ohio Society of Professional Engineers. We look forward to continuing to work with you. I'm available to answer any questions you may have of me.