

The Honorable Representative Scott Wiggam  
Chair, House Committee on State and Local Government  
Vern Riffe Center, 77 South High Street  
Columbus, OH 43215-6111

Dear Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chairwoman John, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the State and Local Government Committee:

The Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards (CLARB), The National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) and The National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) thanks you for the opportunity to comment on House Bill 203 (H.B. 203). As staunch supporters of eliminating unnecessary barriers for professionals, and championing licensure pathways to further ensure qualified applicants are licensed to practice, CLARB, NCARB and NCEES support minimum competency and accountability for professionals responsible for protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

The goals of H.B. 203 are laudable. However, we think incorporating language from Senate Bill (S.B. 131) will best support our national mobility framework, uphold our professions' education, examination, and experience standards, and strengthen mobility for future Ohioans. We are all united in our desire to make professional licensure less burdensome and more accessible to applicants without cumbersome regulations. The Ohio Architects Board, the Ohio Landscape Architects Board, and the Ohio State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Surveyors (the Boards) all currently have licensure mobility processes in place to accomplish this goal and mitigate any potential barriers without compromising the safety of Ohioans. Current Ohio law provides streamlined pathways for out-of-state applicants to obtain an architect, landscape architect, professional engineer, or professional surveyor license in Ohio. We respectfully encourage the Committee to consider our professions' national licensing frameworks as models for other occupations as well as language from S.B. 131 to best improve mobility for all professionals.

S.B. 131 Sec. 4796.22(B) (Page 14, line 387) includes languages allowing licensing authorities to verify out of state applicants' qualifications using the "National standard" for licensure in their profession. "National standard" as defined in Sect. 4796.01(H) (Page 5, line 119) means a standard declared by a national organization to be the preferred standard for licensure of a profession if the standard is required by at least forty-five states, including Ohio, in order to receive a license in the profession. This provision also requires that the standard include a uniform minimum education or experience requirement as well as a national examination, all of which are present in the national uniform standards for architect, engineer, surveyor, and landscape architect licensing models that ensure licensees are competent to protect the public. Using this language will support the principles and goals of H.B. 203 without disrupting the current reciprocity processes within our professions.

All U.S states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands currently have a professional licensing framework in place that requires applicants seeking an initial license to meet a national, uniform set of standards. This provides

those seeking an initial license in Ohio with a straightforward process to demonstrate a minimum level of competence and well-positions them for a reciprocal license in another state. The same is true for individuals licensed in other states and seeking a reciprocal license in Ohio.

We would welcome your support in ensuring our qualified professionals are provided the ability to remain mobile within the professions and we believe incorporating language from S.B. 131 will best help accomplish our shared goal. If we can provide further assistance to the Committee as it considers how best to move forward with H.B. 203 and the considerations we have laid out here, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Respectfully,



Michael J. Armstrong  
Chief Executive Officer, National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB)



David Cox  
Chief Executive Officer, National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES)



Matt M. Miller  
Chief Executive Officer, Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards (CLARB)