

NEASCE Members

RE: Joint meeting for LB 665

DATE: January 30, 2014

Update from the ad-hoc meeting in an attempt to resolve the conflict between the various state engineering societies and the Nebraska Board of Examiners for Engineers and Architects. Representing the Board of Examiners was: **Fred Choobineh**, Engineer, Lincoln, Education, Member **Michael J. Konzett**, Engineer, Omaha, Board Member, and Steve Masters, recently hired Executive Director. Also at the meeting were representatives from the following engineering societies: ASCE, NeSPE and SEAON. Gordon Kissel, the lobbyist retained by Professional Engineer Coalition, PEC, was also there to provide guidance for us concerning the law making process.

Board of Examiners stated strongly that they wanted to get a updated Registration Law through the Unicameral in order to keep Nebraska current with newly presented model laws for registration. One of the key aspects of the proposed changes was an attempt to streamline procedures to become registered. This was to be done by moving the time frame for taking the Principles and Practice of Engineering exam (PE). The new provision would allow a candidate to take the PE exam at their discretion instead of mandating a 4 year delay.

The discussion at the nearly 2 and half hour meeting wavered back and for, each side presenting hypothetical cases to support their view points. Discussions included definitions of competence and ethics and how an exam or experience can measure or reveal such characteristics. People wanted to clarify difference between what should be in the law and what should be in the rules and regulations.

Towards the end of the meeting two items became clearer: (1) Gordon pointed out that chances of the bill actually getting out of committee and on the legislative floor for a vote this year is going to be slim. Senator Krist would probably need to make this a priority bill in order for this to make it for a vote. (2) I then asked the Board Members to consider what the state's engineering societies representing the practicing engineers are telling them: **There is strong opinion that there should not be a change in the time frame from 4 years to 0 zero years. Would there be another time period acceptable to the Board?** Fred Choobineh with the board said that the only time limit that would be considered would be 0 or leaving it at the existing 4 years. It was agreed that 4 years was the only acceptable time frame. Fred and Mike Konzett indicated that they would present to the Board of Examiners for a vote tomorrow (Friday, January 31) on augmenting the first Amendment to leave the time frame at the 4 year limit. They asked that the engineering societies would then come out in strong support for LB 665 in order to provide the best chance of passage this year.

Sincerely

Bill Arneson, Legislative Co-Chairperson
Nebraska Section, ASCE