



TESTIMONY BEFORE THE COMMERCE COMMITTEE
REGARDING COMMITTEE BILL 5821
February 26, 2009

Good morning, my name is Paul Brady. I am the Executive Director of the American Council of Engineering Companies of Connecticut, representing some 100 consulting engineering firms in the state and the Connecticut Society of Professional Engineers with over 450 individual licensed Professional Engineer members. I would like to testify in opposition to Committee Bill 5821, *AN ACT CONCERNING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS*.

The bill establishes a new "engineering professional license" for engineers and others who would expedite the approval of economic development projects for the Department of Economic and Community Development. However, the state already licenses Professional Engineers under the Department of Consumer Protection (CGS Title 20, Chapter 391). Having two almost identically named licensing statutes would be duplicative in nature and disastrous in implementation.

The Department of Consumer Protection licenses Professional Engineers to protect the public safety, health and welfare. The bill's licensing qualifications are considerably less than the requirements for a Professional Engineer. Having unqualified people designing or approving projects could be dangerous: people could die or be injured in traffic accidents, building collapses, environmental accidents, etc.

Consumers and local public officials would be confused about the difference between a licensed professional engineer and a licensed engineering professional. The act of certifying a project for DECD without a PE license would be a violation of Chapter 391.

Currently, a Connecticut PE license is routinely accepted throughout the United States as evidence that the holder has demonstrated sufficient education, experience and examinations for licensure. If lesser qualified individuals are licensed by this bill, other states will make it more difficult for Connecticut licensed professional engineers to perform work in their states. This could result in delays or cancellation of contracts for well-paid engineering contracts. Also, if this bill were to become law, the state might well have significant liabilities should decisions of a licensed engineering professional be found not to meet the standard of care for professional engineers.

There is simply no need to duplicate licensing boards, staff, examinations, and all the accompanying administrative overhead. The existing Board of Examiners for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors within the Department of Consumer Protection is sufficient. Governor Rell has proposed reducing the number of boards and commissions in response to the state's budget crisis. This new board would incur unneeded expenses for taxpayers. For example, developing a valid examination for engineers could cost over \$1 million and several years of work.

The currently licensed Professional Engineers are already qualified to provide services to the Department of Economic and Community Development. The national standards for licensing engineers are promulgated by the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) and are enacted by all states, including Connecticut, insure the public safety. Why would we wish to change this system which is serving us well?

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE COMMERCE COMMITTEE
REGARDING COMMITTEE BILL 5821

Presented by Paul W. Brady

February 26, 2009

We fail to understand the need for this legislation and our members currently are able and more than willing to support the needs of DECD. We would suggest that we work together to develop a manageable solution that fosters economic development, protects the health and safety of our citizens and recognizes the experience and integrity of our licensed Professional Engineers. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Paul W. Brady
Executive Director
American Council of Engineering Companies of Connecticut (ACEC/CT)
Connecticut Society of Professional Engineers (CSPE)
460 Smith Street, Suite K
Middletown CT 06457
Phone (860) 635-5522
Fax (866) 668-9858
pbrady@ctengineers.org