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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE  
REGARDING SB923

March 5, 2013

I am David Toce, PE, SECB, President of the Structural Engineers Coalition (SEC), representing approximately 175 structural engineers providing independent engineering services to the public and private sector.

On behalf of SEC, I would like to speak in favor of SB 923, AN ACT CONCERNING STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS AND REQUIRING CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS AND LAND SURVEYORS.

The practice of structural engineering is changing rapidly and becoming increasingly complex. Expanded knowledge of earthquake effects, wind and other extreme load cases have greatly increased complexity of building codes and standards. Technological advances enable more complicated analyses with complex software; while owners have higher expectations for building performance. All of these changes require an increase in knowledge and skill on the part of the structural engineer. In recognition of this trend, in April 2011, the National Council of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyors (NCEES) replaced the two, 8 hour SE I and SE II examinations with a single 16 hour structural engineering examination. NCEES issued a model law structural engineer definition as someone who has passed this new 16 hour examination.

Over the last couple of years, SEC has established and supported a Licensing Committee to investigate and advocate structural engineer licensing in Connecticut. The primary goal of this committee is to better protect the health, welfare and safety of the public. Currently 11 states have some form of SE licensure and several more are in the process.

The SEC Licensing Committee has drafted legislative language which would require those buildings which are large or complex (exceed the threshold limits stated in Connecticut General Statutes Section 29-276b) to be designed by a Professional Structural Engineer. Most buildings would not need to be designed by a Professional Structural Engineer, nor would bridges and other non-building structures. There will be a transitional period which will allow practicing structural engineers with an active Connecticut Professional Engineer license to obtain a Professional Structural Engineer license without passing any additional exams.

The SEC Licensing Committee has had several meetings over the last couple of years with state agencies and design professional organizations to gather comments and to gain support. These groups include: the state licensing board, Department of Construction Services, the Connecticut

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Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, Construction Institute, Connecticut Society of Professional Engineers and Connecticut Society of Civil Engineers.

ACEC/CT has submitted wording that we would like to see incorporated into the final bill.

Thank you for your consideration. I would be happy to answer any of your questions.

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