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Senator Carlo Leone, Co-Chairman  
Representative David Baram, Co-Chairman  
Members of the General Law Committee

Re: SB-158, An Act Concerning Landscape Architect Licenses

I would like to express my opposition to SB-158, An Act Concerning Landscape Architect Licenses.

I believe it is important to remember that the current requirements for licensure are in place in order to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public. Education, experience, and examination are the core principles for licensure, and this bill seeks to weaken all three. The bill as proposed, illustrates not only a lack of understanding of the profession, but also a desire to place personal and/or political agendas above concerns for public safety. I find this bill to be an insult to the entire profession of landscape architecture.

Education: As an alumni of The University of Connecticut, I feel strongly that we should support our state universities in every way possible. Currently, the Landscape Architecture program at UConn is accredited by the LAAB. The proposed bill would make a degree in landscape architecture from UConn irrelevant to in-state licensure, and may cause graduates of the program to seek employment in another state where a LAAB accredited degree is valued. The widespread loss of talented, young, Connecticut-educated professionals to other states such as New York and Massachusetts is a real problem, and we should not be passing legislation to exacerbate this already bad situation.

Experience: The current law already allows for applicants without a degree from a LAAB accredited program to gain licensure. To license someone with no professional education, with no examination, and after only three years of experience (possibly under the direction of someone with similarly weak credentials) is blatantly irresponsible.

Examination: All 50 states require landscape architects to pass the LARE exam. This bill would make Connecticut the only state in the country to not require passing the LARE in order to gain licensure.

For these reasons, I urge you to also oppose SB-158.

Sincerely,

Joseph Kelleher, PLA, ASLA, LEED Green Associate