

February 15, 2015

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

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

I am writing to express my strong opposition to proposed bill SB-158. This bill totally disregards the public safety of the citizens of Connecticut. As you know, like architects and engineers, landscape architects are entrusted through licensure to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. The actual intent of this bill is unclear, but it very much reads as an affront to the entire profession of landscape architecture in Connecticut.

The proposed bill would weaken terribly the licensure standard for landscape architects in the state. These standards have been in place for decades, and have been proven to be trusted by not only landscape architect professionals, but by our peers in architecture, engineering, surveying, and other land use and land development professions. The current licensure standards are also well respected by government officials at the local, state, and federal levels. These officials are regularly charged with reviewing the complex site plans prepared by landscape architects including grading, erosion control, stormwater management, traffic flow, lighting, and planting plans, documents which include detailed construction specifications and direction, as well as providing for the protection of natural resources such as wetlands, watercourses and waterbodies, soils, wildlife, and other environmentally sensitive areas.

The proposed bill would do the following:

1. Eliminate the requirement for the nationally accepted LARE exam, a four-part rigorous exam, which all 50 states require to gain licensure.
2. Strip the appropriate educational requirement. Currently, to achieve licensure, an applicant must acquire a degree from a college program accredited by the Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB), such as UCONN's landscape architecture program. The proposed bill suggests this educational component is unimportant and can be replaced with any "bachelor's degree".
3. Reduce the technical training required. The proposed bill reads that a person with "three years of relevant experience" may be licensed as a landscape architect. This bill provides no definition for this experience and it is impossible to ascertain what this legislation would consider relevant. The current law allows an exception for the person who does not acquire an LAAB accredited degree by requiring eight years of experience under the direction of a licensed landscape architect before they can sit for the exam, an appropriate standard.

As a landscape architect, in my career encompassing almost two decades of professional work, projects I have worked on include multi-million dollar site development activities including rebuilding entire neighborhoods in New Haven, restructuring an entire school system and multi-school campus in Weston, numerous other elementary and higher education school facilities, subdivisions of land throughout the state, commercial, industrial, and residential developments.

Like me, other landscape architects throughout Connecticut are working on similar projects in our every day, diverse work. It would be completely irresponsible of the state to allow for a person with the training, education, and experience, or lack thereof, identified in proposed bill SB-158 to design such comprehensive land development projects.

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

Sincerely,

William N. Pollack, PLA, ASLA, LEED AP

Senior Associate  
Keith E. Simpson Associates  
Landscape Architecture/ Environmental Site Planning  
3 Forest Street  
New Canaan, CT 06840  
203-966-7071  
[www.keithsimpsonassociates.com](http://www.keithsimpsonassociates.com)

home address:  
49 Newman Place  
Fairfield, CT 06825