

TO: NSPE Board of Directors

cc: NSPE House of Delegates
NSPE Committee, Task Force, Council and Interest Group Chairs
State Society Presidents and Presidents-elect
State Society Executives Council
NSPE Past Presidents

FROM: Mark J. Golden, FASAE, CAE 
Executive Director

DATE: April 17, 2017

RE: Board Update: April 1-15, 2017

Championing the PE License

Nevada is the latest state to face a full frontal [attack on professional licensure](#), and the events which transpired over a matter of hours makes a great case study on why NSPE is so critical to PEs and the public they serve, and the power of partnership between national and state societies.

Late in the day Tuesday, April 11th, at the last minute and without any advanced warning, a bill in the Nevada legislature (A.B. 353) that would erode occupational licensure in the state was scheduled for consideration the next morning. National and state leaders immediately went into action, preparing a response to the proposal, including filing a joint letter of opposition before the deadline, which was 5:00 PM that day. As a result of our timely and forceful intervention, in writing and working behind the scenes with our network of national and local licensing contacts, the bill was dropped from the legislative committee's agenda the next day.

From first alert to decisive and successful action, an existential threat to the PE was eliminated, between 4:00 PM and 8:00 PM Eastern on a Tuesday afternoon. Neither national nor the state society acting on its own would have been sufficient. It took diligent, active and constant vigilance, backed up by an established and engaged network of concerned members and staff (national and state) working together to enable such a nimble and effective response.

[In their letter](#) to the Nevada Assembly Committee on Commerce and Labor, NSPE President Kodi Jean Verhalen, P.E., Esq., F.NSPE, and NSPE-NV President Craig Sisco, P.E., emphasized the importance of occupational licensure for professional engineers. "The professional engineer's foremost responsibility is to practice in a manner that protects the

NSPE encourages states to use the information in this report in newsletters or other updates to their membership to inform members on the activities of NSPE. As a suggestion, it may be most useful to take the bullets of most interest from the transmittal email. The full report (and past reports) can always be found [online](#).

public health, safety, and welfare. Nevada's professional engineers design and administer the construction of bridges, tunnels, buildings, waste-water treatment facilities, plants, factories, processing centers, and many other public and private development projects. The professional engineer (PE) license demonstrates an engineer's commitment to the highest standards of engineering practice and ethical conduct and shows that

the individual has the proper education, experience and qualifications to provide these engineering services to the public.”

NSPE and the Maine Society of Professional Engineers are opposing legislation that would eliminate continuing education requirements in the state. Currently, professional engineers licensed in Maine must complete 30 professional development hours every two years.

[In a letter](#) to the Maine Joint Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development, NSPE President Kodi Jean Verhalen, P.E., Esq., F.NSPE, and MeSPE President Colin Hewett, P.E., LEED AP, emphasized the importance of continuing education requirements for professional engineers. “The universe of engineering knowledge continues to expand with time. Just as evolving technical precepts are integrated into classroom instruction, so too the practicing engineer must grow in knowledge to remain effective and competent,” the letter states. “Mandatory continuing education requirements, overseen and enforced by the licensure board, ensure that PEs continue to learn, grow, and benefit the profession and their own development, as well as protect the public health, safety, and welfare.”

Over 40 state licensing boards require that professional engineers maintain and improve their skills through continuing education courses. The number of states requiring continuing education requirements continues to grow. If the bill (L.D. 1165) is enacted, Maine would put its professional engineers at a significant disadvantage with almost all other states requiring continuing education; endanger the public health, safety, and welfare; and possibly create comity issues with other states.

The Joint Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development held a hearing on the bill on April 13th. MeSPE presented the joint comment and spoke in opposition to the proposed elimination of continuing education requirements. The comment was well-received. The legislative process is ongoing but it appears that the coordinated opposition to the proposal may help defeat the initiative. NSPE will provide updates as they become available.

Ethical Guide to the Profession

On April 24th, the National Academy of Engineering (NAE) and American Association of Engineering Societies (AAES) will host its annual convocation. The afternoon is dedicated to “Ethics and Autonomous Vehicles” and will be filled with a very prestigious panel of speakers. NSPE is honored to have President Kodi Verhalen moderating the discussion. At NSPE's request, NAE will be webcasting this event. You can watch the live event [here](#), and are encouraged to make your members aware of this opportunity. The panel runs from 2:00 to 4:00 PM Eastern, with moderate discussion to follow.

The NSPE Board of Ethical Review has created a new [PowerPoint presentation](#) for use by national and state leaders to conduct engineering ethics seminars at the state and local levels. In addition, it has completed a redesigned and reformatted NSPE Code of Ethics for Engineers and NSPE Ethics Creed, and revised the [NSPE Engineering Ethics Guide](#) on the [NSPE ethics homepage](#).

The National Academy of Forensic Engineers has formally reaffirmed its support of the NSPE-NAFE Joint Position Statement on Forensic Engineering, which corresponds with [NSPE Position Statement 1748](#).

Powering Professional Advancement

All the professional and leadership sessions are confirmed for the 2017 PE Conference, July 19-23 in Atlanta. We are two months ahead of schedule compared to planning for the 2016 PE Conference. Attendees can earn up to 12 PDHs for the two days of learning. Major topic areas for this year's conference are ethics, energy, infrastructure, sustainability and the future of the profession. Updated information regarding speakers and session topics are available on the NSPE website under [PE Conference](#).

Uniting the PE Community

Each state society received a state-specific analysis of the proposed, new [membership business model](#) in its current form on April 6th, and the feedback is flowing in. Some of the reaction has been very positive; other reactions quite negative; all the feedback is a vital and constructive element for continuing the effort to perfect and improve the proposal in advance of its presentation to the House of Delegates in July. Regional Directors and other national and state leaders continue to meet regularly with staff and volunteer leadership in each state society to keep the dialogue open, because with any proposal as complex and far-reaching as this one, each question answered raises new questions that need to be addressed. Monthly webinars with the House of Delegate are planned. These will help to understand problems and craft improvements.

Since the launch of NSPE's online communities a year ago, there have been over 175 discussions started on the Open Forum alone with over 1533 replies. In the last three months, there have been 50 discussions started with over 307 replies (an average of 6 replies per thread).

Members across the country are increasingly recognizing the power of the online communities to crowdsource a question to their peers nationally and share their experiences and expertise as professional engineers. Recent topics have included:

- What would be the optimal number of projects that a PM should manage?
- Do you use an engineering notebook/journal? What are your techniques for using it? Do you keep it digitally?
- What are the PE license benefits to young engineers and students?

In March, MATHCOUNTS was a featured participant at the prestigious South by South West Festival in Austin, Texas, when mathletes paired up with a few members of Congress and STEM leaders to show off their skills. Congressional representatives Will Hurd (R-TX), Randy Hultgren (R-IL), Marc Veasey (D-Texas), and Suzan DelBene (D-WA), and Alex Wirth, cofounder of Quorum, were some of the participants in the Dell-sponsored event. Seventh grader Andrew Cai and Alex Wirth came out as the victors in the final match up against Rep. DelBene and mathlete Angelina Yi, according to [The Hill blog](#).

The main event, the 2017 Raytheon MATHCOUNTS National Competition, will be held May 13-16 in Orlando, Florida, featuring the top 224 mathletes from 50 states, US territories, and State Department and Department of Defense schools.

And remember, you always have access to NSPE leadership resources in the [Leadership Toolbox](#). This includes [talking point](#) scripts and presentations for use by NSPE officers,

board members, and other leaders during state visits, chapter meetings, or other venues to promote NSPE and its activities, updated on an at-least quarterly basis. Current board members can access an online library of board meeting materials (past, current and future) through the online board book site, ([BoardBookIt](#)).

If you want to review NSPE's history and how that has been translated into current plans with a future-focus, NSPE's purpose, mission, vision and a history of the *Race for Relevance* and the resulting Strategic Plan is summarized in a section called "[Who We Are and What We Do.](#)"