

TO: NSPE Board of Directors

cc: House of Delegates/Incoming 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: June 15, 2017

RE: Board Update: June 1-15, 2017

Championing the PE License

As part of NSPE's multi-faceted effort to promote and protect the PE license in the face of major, coordinated [attacks on occupational licensure](#), NSPE has engaged with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). NSPE Deputy Executive Director and General Counsel Art Schwartz and Senior Manager of Government Relations Arielle Eiser had a call on June 13th with Tara Isa Koslov, Acting Director of the FTC's Office of Policy Planning and head of the [FTC's Economic Liberty Task Force](#). NSPE articulated the critical value of engineering licensure to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. Ms. Koslov stated that she has absolutely no interest in changing engineering licensure. Although she cannot speak entirely on behalf of FTC Acting Chairman Maureen Ohlhausen, FTC recognizes that certain professions are essential and must be licensed, such as engineering.

There is a culture at the current time to remove barriers to entrepreneurship. The states are therefore trying to make changes, although not all states are necessarily going about it in the best way. Too often, the PE license gets swept up by these efforts and is improperly characterized as an impediment to employment and business opportunities. The FTC has formed an Economic Liberty Task Force, which Acting Chairman Ohlhausen has charged Ms. Koslov with leading. The task force is looking at where there are opportunities to remove barriers to entry and where the current system can be improved, including improving mobility of licenses across states.

In the short term, the FTC is convening a series of roundtables to learn more about the issues. They are currently working on convening one on July 27th pertaining to portability, reciprocity, and interstate compacts. The roundtable is still pending approval but should hopefully be announced by mid-to-late June. The FTC has been impressed with engineering licensure and believes it can serve as a model to other professions. Tara indicated they are working with NCEES and other organizations that represent state licensing authorities to provide a panelist for this roundtable tentatively scheduled for late July 2017, which NSPE staff plans to attend and participate. A public comment period will also be opened for any additional input. The roundtable is open to the public.

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](#).

Art Schwartz and Arielle Eiser had an earlier call with Davy McDowell, NCEES Chief Operating Officer, on June 9th and discussed the FTC issue, recognizing common cause to raise awareness of the value of engineering licensure and have expressed a strong interest in continued information sharing.

In the long term, according to Ms. Koslov, the FTC is interested in potentially developing guidance and best practices for the states to use as they move forward. This was a very productive and promising conversation, indicating a recognition of the value of engineering licensure. Continued engagement will benefit the profession, NSPE, and the public health, safety, and welfare.

In another skirmish in this ongoing war on occupational licensure, NSPE submitted a [letter-to-the-editor](#) to *The Washington Post* in response to an op-ed piece about a much-publicized case involving the Oregon State Board of Examiners for Engineering and Land Surveying. NSPE staff and the leadership have been following this case since the news originally broke in late April. It flared up again when George Will used it as the subject of his [column](#) on Wednesday, June 7th: “Oregon is suing engineers for . . . speaking up about engineering?”

The letter clarified why professional licensure is essential and the role state licensing boards play in ensuring that qualified individuals practice in a manner that safeguards the public and that those who fail to do so are held accountable.

Opinions vary on the appropriateness of the Oregon board’s decision to fine the individual involved, but ***no matter the outcome in this particular case (which is now in litigation), the principle of licensing engineers is sound.*** And the enforcement of a state's engineering licensure laws and rules by licensing boards is critical in this pursuit.

Idaho is just the latest state to undertake a sweeping review of occupational licensing requirements. An [executive order](#) issued by Lieutenant Governor Brad Little requires all state agencies to submit a report to the Office of the Governor no later than July 1, 2018. The report will assess whether the licensure requirements are necessary and in the public interest provide recommendations for improvement, modification or elimination. Under the review process, the report from each executive agency will include:

- The timeframe in which a license is either granted or denied
- Prerequisites for a license
- Renewal requirements
- Requirements for accepting or denying an application and license renewal
- Qualifications for suspension, revocation or other disciplinary action
- The cost to apply for an application or renewal of a license
- The cost for administering the licensing and renewal process

In addition to the executive order, Lieutenant Governor Little set up a [website](#) for the public to provide testimony on licensing concerns.

NSPE has reached out to the Idaho state society and we will continue work together to respond aggressively to this proceeding.

In a [letter](#) to Department of Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao, NSPE emphasized the essential role of professional engineers in the nation’s transportation infrastructure. President Kodi Verhalen stated, “professional engineer’s education, experience, and professional obligations to protect the public health, safety, and welfare place the

professional engineer in a key leadership role in ensuring infrastructure innovation, rebuilding, and growth. Specifically, professional engineering activities associated with infrastructure, such as development studies, design, implementation plans, construction quality assurance, operations, and maintenance, fulfill DOT's mission, as well as enrich and enhance our global economy." The letter went on to emphasize that professional engineers can provide DOT with critical expertise and serve a unique role in infrastructure development as the individuals in the decision chain who have a duty to put public safety first. Professional engineers also play a key role in innovative design, ensuring cost savings, and construction quality that will better position us to compete with our international counterparts.

A [bill](#) now being considered in the North Carolina Committee on Rules and Operations of the Senate seeks to permit commercial interior designers to practice engineering. It is very similar to a proposal in [Oregon](#), which NSPE and its Oregon affiliate have already responded to. National is working with the Professional Engineers of North Carolina to oppose this initiative.

Ethical Guide to the Profession

The conversation continues in reaction to the May/June PE magazine cover story on the "[A Worrisome Workplace](#)." We are using the opportunity created by this hot topic to support on-going dialogue and action on other "Big Issues" as well.

When issues like this arise, and are covered in the magazine (NSPE's most visible content vehicle), we have a ton of great resources and related content that couldn't fit into just one article or even a group of articles. Staff is working to create a new section of the website, similar to "[Action on Issues](#)," where we can highlight all this content (including [Open Forum](#) discussions, available to all NSPE members) and provide links to related resources. This landing page will have links to prominent issues we've covered in PE, like sexual harassment/bias in the workplace and the image of the engineer. Each topic will have its own page where we provide links to all the related content, whether it's NSPE content or content from other reputable sources.

Powering Professional Advancement

We are in the final countdown for the annual meeting, but the PECon experience and community does not begin nor does it end with the physical meeting itself in Georgia. An online community for attendees is now open, giving you the opportunity to stay informed about the latest conference details, have discussions with fellow attendees, and make connections before getting onsite. You will also be able to use this community to access presentations and other conference resources.

And attendees get special recognition for their planned participation in this event with a virtual 2017 PECON badge which will be displayed in your online profile.

To join the conversation in the new 2017 PECON Community:

1. Visit community.nspe.org.
2. Login by clicking the green login button in the top right corner of the page. Your username and password are the same as what you use for the NSPE website. If you're not sure what your login information is, click on the 'I forgot my password' link and follow the prompts.

3. If you have not participated in NSPE Communities before and this is your first time logging in, follow the instructions under '**New Here? Get Started...**' to complete your profile.
4. Click on the "Communities" tab at the top of the page, and then "My Communities." Here you will find the new **2017 PECON Community** listed. Introduce yourself, post a question, or start participating in an existing discussion.

Current engineering students and recent graduates might be interested in internship opportunities with the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. (The Office of Science and Technology Policy advises the President on the effects of science and technology on domestic and international affairs. The office serves as a source of scientific and technological analysis and judgment for the President with respect to major policies, plans, and programs of the Federal Government.) OSTP is currently accepting applications for its Fall Policy Internship Program. The application deadline is June 28, 2017. Students who are U.S. citizens and who will be enrolled in, or have just graduated from, an academic program should feel free to apply. More information and application instructions are available [online](#). Interns are accepted for one of three annual terms (Spring, Summer, or Fall), which each last no more than 90 days. The assignments provide educational enrichment, practical work experience, and networking opportunities with other individuals in the science and technology policy arena.

The National Engineers Week Foundation (d.b.a. DiscoverE) has a robust catalog of [online tutorials](#) on becoming a more effective volunteer. Available programs include effectively talking to kids about engineering, planning and staging a major meeting/event, and becoming a more confident volunteer. Most of the case study examples are drawn from eWeek activities, but are broadly applicable to your role as a state or national volunteer leader.

Uniting the PE Community

The Kansas Society of Professional Engineers has become the 26th of our affiliates to adopt the new logo, meaning that less than a year since the new national logo was rolled out, half of our state societies are using logos based on the new branding.

NSPE officers, board members and volunteers participated in the following meetings/events during the first two weeks in June.

- President-elect Tom Roberts participated in the Texas Society of Professional Engineers annual conference in Austin before traveling to Columbus, Ohio where he attended the Ohio Society annual meeting. Tom has been presenting ethics sessions on his state visits.
- Vice President Michael Aiken first attended a joint annual meeting banquet of the DC Society of Professional Engineers and the Potomac Chapter of the Maryland SPE, then traveled to Quechee, Vermont where he met with members of the New Hampshire and Vermont societies at their annual joint dinner and installation ceremony.
- Immediate Past President Tim Austin attended the annual meeting of the Idaho Society of Professional Engineers in Coeur d'Alene where he was the luncheon keynote speaker. On June 16th he travels to Albuquerque to participate in the

annual meeting of the New Mexico Society where he will deliver sessions on autonomous vehicles and the “Transcending of the Professional Engineer.”

- Central Region Director Chris Butler and Interest Group Director Jim Harper represented NSPE at meetings of the Indiana Society and the New York State Society, respectively. In addition to installing officers, both Chris and Jim delivered sessions on ethics.
- Southwest Region Director David Conner participated in NSPE-Colorado’s annual awards ceremony while Northeast Region Director David D’Amico attended the annual meeting of the Oklahoma Society.
- Southeast Region Director Shannon Looney traveled to Wilmington, North Carolina for the annual conference of the Professional Engineers of North Carolina, and I attended the annual conference of the South Carolina Society which took place in Myrtle Beach.
- NSPE Past President Robert Green represented NSPE on the judging panel for the NCEES Engineering Award: Connecting Professional Practice and Education. (NSPE has a permanent seat on this panel.)
- But the NSPE officer covering the most distance the last two weeks was President Verhalen, who traveled to Guam to meet with Guam SPE members after which she took off for Tokyo where she spoke with the Japan Accreditation Board for Engineering Education and the Japan Society of Professional Engineers. Shortly after her return home, she was off once again this time to Lawrence, Kansas to meet with the KSPE board and membership at their annual meeting.

These visits continue to offer an important opportunity for NSPE officers, directors and staff to meet with state society boards, address the membership, participate in installation and awards ceremonies, and deliver education sessions.

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](#).”