

State News for NSPE Members

Alaska Licensure Legislation

HB291 – Commercial Interior Designers

This bill's primary purpose is to allow licensure of commercial interior designers to do work inside buildings like moving non-bearing walls, changing doors, changing finishes, and similar type reconfiguration. This has been a grey area in the licensing code and plan review and ASPE has supported the licensure of commercial interior designers that have the same training rigor, experience and testing requirements as architects and engineers. Additionally, this bill adds the commercial interior designers to the AELS board seats, and breaks out the current mechanical/electrical combined seat into a mechanical seat and an electrical seat.

SB157 – Temporary Licenses

This bill's intention is to allow military spouses to get licenses to practice in the state on a temporary basis until the full process can be followed if the person meets the qualification of our licenses with a license in other states. In general, since we require some Alaska-specific education (Arctic Engineering) to license in the state, this would not be very applicable. In general, we support comity between states and would likely support an administrative process to grant licenses as soon as the comity requirements are met if it falls between board meetings. We support military spouses working professionally in the state if they meet our license requirements. We will follow hearings on SB157 and provide feedback to the legislation as appropriate.

SB299 – Occupational Licensing

This bill would require the state agency to review every occupational license in the state and set a high bar of justification of licensing at all. This all encompassing de-licensing initiative has popped up in various states, but there has been little action on them. We will keep an eye on it if it progresses through the legislative process.

New Alaska AELS Board Members

The governor has appointed new people to the AELS board as terms have expired. The new members include Loren Leman (Civil – Anchorage), Jeffrey Garness (Engineer other than listed – Anchorage), Eric Milliken (Public – Anchorage), Bob Bell (Surveyor – Anchorage).

Thank you to AELS board members that completed their terms and service to the industry: Colin Maynard (Civil – Anchorage), Dave Hale (Surveyor – Anchorage), Bill Mott (Engineer other than listed – Anchorage).

New Tools Available for PE Advocates

As “occupational reform” bills spring up across the country and put professional licensing at risk, an NSPE-formed coalition has prepared a useful resource kit that can be used by PE advocates to set the record straight.

The [Alliance for Responsible Professional Licensing](#) is working to remind lawmakers that highly complex and technical professions, like engineering, rely on a rigorous system to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. It’s this rigor that clearly sets these professions apart from the vocational occupations that lawmakers often cite in defense of their efforts to weaken licensing requirements.

You can learn more about the threat in an ARPL-produced [webinar](#) covering the organization’s background, its work on behalf of highly technical licensed professions, and the state advocacy tools it’s created.

You’ll also find advocacy and messaging resources on [the main page](#) of the public Drop Box, titled “State Partner Tools and Resources (ARPL).” On this page, you’ll see folders for Key Messages and Talking Points, Lawmaker Outreach Handouts, Public Opinion Research, Sample Letters to the Editor and Op-Eds, Social Media, State Specific Folders, Video Files, and a folder for the webinar.

In addition to NSPE, alliance members include the American Institute of Architects, the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, the American Society of Civil Engineers, the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards, the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy, the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, and the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying.

If you have questions, please contact Margaret Edwards at medwards@nspe.org.

ASPE Member Helps Address Challenges in Rural Communities

Alaska Society member Tom Wolf, P.E., serves as program manager for the Denali Commission, a 14-person federal agency enhancing Alaska's infrastructure through partnerships with Alaskans and tribal, federal, state, and local governments. Wolf oversees energy, bulk fuel, and sanitation at the agency to help address challenges such as reliable and affordable energy.

The Denali Commission's focus includes not only rural power systems and bulk fuel but also transportation, sanitation, broadband infrastructure, health facilities, and housing, as well as workforce and economic development.

The commission doesn't perform work itself but serves as a funding agency. According to its website, it has invested more than \$1.2 billion in more than 300 communities. Most are predominantly Alaska Native-populated.

Wolf and the Denali Commission were featured in the March/April issue of *PE* magazine.

[Read the article.](#)

Washington Post Article Features ASPE Member

A December [article in the Washington Post](#) examined the competing demands of oil production in Alaska with heating temperatures and thawing permafrost, effects attributed to climate change.

The article highlights how oil companies have begun to bury metal tubes, sometimes as long as a football field, filled with refrigerants. The aim is to draw heat from the permafrost so it can stay firm enough to support their equipment.

ASPE member Ed Yarmak, P.E., is chief engineer for the Anchorage-based firm Artic Foundations and installs the systems. According to the article, "His projects for ConocoPhillips are twice as big as the ones he did two decades ago."

[Read the article.](#)

Climate Change Special Issue

As climate change effects proliferate, professional engineers are taking on the crisis. They're working to provide solutions as part of their responsibility to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

The [March/April issue of PE magazine](#) includes three

articles highlighting PEs' work in this area:

- [“Climate Changers”](#) –Young engineers feel a responsibility to take action on climate with their work—and they’re increasingly choosing to work for companies that share this perspective.
- [“Harsh Realities Drive Adaptation”](#) – Cities are targeting climate-change impacts with comprehensive policies. Professional engineers and AEC firms are showing that their expertise can help bring these plans to fruition.
- [“A Grand Challenge Needs to Inspire Grand Solutions”](#) – Professional engineers have an abundance of opportunities to invent creative, innovative solutions to issues surrounding environmental sustainability and resilience.



Share Your Views on the Engineering Profession

Do you support the elimination of state licensure exemptions? Should states align their licensing requirements to help PEs easily practice in multiple jurisdictions? Does your place of employment welcome diverse perspectives?

These are just some of the issues facing the professional engineering community. NSPE encourages you to provide your perspectives on these topics and more by participating in the [2020 Engineering Outlook & Salary Survey](#).

The 15-minute survey is open to NSPE members, engineering students, and engineering professionals. Participants will be eligible to enter a drawing for one of four \$50 Amazon gift cards.

The results of the survey will be made available to participants and will also be shared in *PE* magazine and other NSPE publications.

[Access the 2020 Engineering Outlook & Salary Survey.](#)

Communication on Your Terms: Update Your Preferences

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Step 1: Update your profile

Step 2: Select your email preferences

My Account Links

- My Degrees
- My Donations
- My Downloads
- My Expertise
- My Committees
- Manage my Subscriptions
- My Interest Groups
- My Social Media
- My Payment Info

NSPE is committed to providing the best service possible. To that end, we need to verify that member profile information is accurate. This includes preferred names and titles, and employer and contact information. NSPE asks all members to [review their member profile and update their information](#).

Thanks to updates to the NSPE database, members can now also choose exactly what emails they want to receive. With new subscription management options, members can unsubscribe from some mailing lists without missing out on information of interest to them. In order to make this possible, all members' email settings have been reset to the default. Everyone will need to log into their account to manage their preferences, even if they have previously unsubscribed from a mailing list.

[Update information and preferences.](#)

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