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TESTMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1447 BEFORE THE HOUSE PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE COMMITTEE

I am John Wanner, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers (PSPE). First of all, I would like to thank the chair of the committee, Representative Harhart, for giving us the opportunity to testify and shed some light on the proposals contained in House Bill 1447. Also, thanks to Democratic Chair Representative Reedshaw and all of the committee members for your interest in these licensing issues. PSPE represents licensed engineers from all engineering disciplines: civil, mechanical, structural, chemical, electrical, mining, etc. Likewise, our members practice in diverse areas: construction, education, government, industry and consulting/private practice. As an umbrella organization, we attempt to present a balance view that takes into consideration as many diverse viewpoints from within the engineering community as is possible. My comments today representative the collective view of the society of professional engineers. I have also been authorized to represent the Pennsylvania Society of Land Surveyors today. Land Surveyors are licensed under the same act and registration board as engineers and geologists. Other than a couple of changes in House Bill 1447 that relate to the use of engineering titles, this legislation applies equally to engineers, land surveyors and geologists.

The most notable change proposed in House Bill 1447 is the removal of what is commonly referred to as the "industrial exemption". As other testifiers have already commented on this issue, I will address the remaining issues in the bill. A few of these other changes are an effort to make the Pennsylvania law more consistent with the model licensing law published by the The National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES). To that end, the bill proposes to change the definitions section of the law, specifically to replace the term "engineer in training" with "engineer intern" and adds the new definition for "engineer". There is also a proposed change in the title protection section of the act necessitated by those definition changes.

In addition to the removal of the "industrial exemption", two other current exemptions are also to be eliminated by House Bill 1447. The exemption for a licensee practicing for less than 30 days if that individual is licensed in another state is proposed to be eliminated. The same is true for the exemption for practice on property owned by the entity doing engineering or surveying. Both of these current exemptions are difficult to identify or quantify.

At the time this legislation was introduced, regulations providing for the use of electronic/digital seals had been languishing in the Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs for more than six years. Recently, the Registration Board published regulations providing for the acceptable use of electronic/digital seals. That regulation makes this part of

the bill unnecessary. I should also point out that the Bureau and Board made a concerted effort over the last couple of years to gain input from the regulated community on the regulation. The regulation is expected to be published as final in the not too distant future.

Lastly, the bill adds a grandfather's clause to accommodate individuals working in industry that would be impacted by the removal of the industrial exemption. The intent is that no one would be disenfranchised by elimination of the exemption.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. I would be happy to answer any questions.