

TALKING POINTS FOR 2014 SC LEGISLATIVE SESSION

1. The engineering and surveying practice acts (H. 3832 and S. 497) are critical this session. These bills were introduced last session after months of review and drafting by the SC State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Surveyors with input from both professions. The bills reflect today's engineering and surveying practices and closely follow the NCEES Model Law. (National Council of Examiners of Engineers and Surveyors headquartered in Clemson, SC).
2. Important sections of this comprehensive bill are
 - a. The definition of the practice of engineering is modified to reflect more of the activities and areas professional engineers are asked to perform and have been covering such as chemical, environmental and commissioning.
 - b. Prohibition from entering into a contract for professional services on any basis other than direct negotiations is extremely important. This section requires public bodies to select engineering and surveying work by qualifications not by price. Federal and State agencies have been required to use this selection process for about 40 years. With this section in the law, engineers and surveyors are prohibited from quoting the price for a job before they are selected to do the work.
 - c. The Practice Act legislation allows registered engineers from out of state to practice in-state without obtaining a PE license for 90 days when an emergency is declared at the state or national level. (This waiver includes engineering work done for hire, not necessarily as volunteer work.)
 - d. This legislation also clarifies requirements for obtaining a professional engineer license in South Carolina and specifies requirements for re-examination for those who do not pass the PE exam the first time.
3. Although not contained in the Practice Act bills, engineers and surveyors are fully expecting an amendment to the current Industry Exemption of engineering services. There was a significant effort to give carte blanche exemptions to do engineering work in industry. Engineers and surveyors successfully worked a compromise tying an exemption to companies regulated by the Federal Aviation Administration.
4. There may be other amendments during House and Senate subcommittee meetings that will be reviewed by engineers and surveyors and comments made on them then.
5. Engineers and surveyors are asking legislators to look at all aspects of this bill with an open mind and to support it.