

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2229

As Passed Senate, March 6, 2026

Title: An act relating to the professional engineers' registration act.

Brief Description: Concerning the professional engineers' registration act.

Sponsors: House Committee on Consumer Protection & Business (originally sponsored by Representatives Zahn, Waters, Leavitt, Parshley, Lekanoff, Reed and Thai; by request of Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/10/26, 68-26.

Committee Activity: Labor & Commerce: 2/20/26, 2/23/26 [DP, DNP].

Floor Activity: Passed Senate: 3/6/26, 37-11.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Revises provisions in the Professional Engineers' Registration Act related to membership of the Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors, registration requirements and fees, applications, examinations, and removing obsolete language and updating terminology.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & COMMERCE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Saldaña, Chair; Alvarado, Vice Chair; Conway, Vice Chair; King, Ranking Member; Hunt and Stanford.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators MacEwen and Schoesler.

Staff: Jarrett Sacks (786-7448)

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Background: Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors. Under the Professional Engineers' Registration Act (Act), a person practicing or offering to practice engineering or land surveying must be qualified and registered with the Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors (Board). The Board also licenses persons performing design services for on-site wastewater treatment systems. The Board consists of seven members, who are appointed by the Governor.

Five members must be registered professional engineers, and two members must be registered professional land surveyors. Each member must have been actively engaged in the practice of engineering or land surveying for at least ten years subsequent to registration, five of which being immediately prior to their appointment. Each Board member must be a citizen of the United States and a Washington resident for at least five years immediately preceding the appointment.

Upon request of the Board, and with approval of the director of the Board (Director), the Board chair must appoint up to two pro tem members of the Board. The appointments are limited, as defined by the Board chair, for the purpose of participating as a temporary member of the Board on any combination of one or more committees or formal disciplinary hearing panels. An appointee must meet the same qualifications as a Board member. While serving as a pro tem member, an appointed person has all the powers, duties, and immunities of a Board member. A pro tem appointment may not last for more than 180 days unless approved by the Director.

Roster Information. A roster showing the names and places of business of all registered professional engineers and land surveyors may be published for distribution, upon request, to registered professional engineers and land surveyors and to the public.

Registration Requirements. For professional engineers, the minimum qualifications for registration as a professional engineer include eight years or more of experience in engineering work, successfully passing a written or oral examination, or both. Graduation in an approved engineering curriculum of four years or more from a school or college approved by the Board as of satisfactory standing is considered equivalent to four years of experience. Graduation in a curriculum other than engineering from a school or college approved by the Board is considered as equivalent to two years of experience. No applicant may receive credit for more than four years of experience because of undergraduate educational qualifications. The Board may, at its discretion, give credit as experience not in excess of one year for satisfactory postgraduate study in engineering.

For professional land surveyors, a specific record of eight years or more of experience in land surveying work of a character satisfactory to the Board is required, indicating that the applicant is competent to practice land surveying, and successfully passing a written or oral examination, or both, in surveying as prescribed by the Board. Graduation from a school or college approved by the Board as of satisfactory standing, including the completion of an approved course in surveying, must be considered equivalent to four years of the required

experience. Postgraduate college courses approved by the Board must be considered for up to one additional year of the required experience.

Applications and Fees. An application for registration must:

- be on forms prescribed by the Board and furnished by the Director;
- contain statements made under oath, showing the applicant's education and detail summary of their technical work; and
- contain verification of the technical work from professional engineers that supervised the applicant's technical work and have personal knowledge of the applicant's engineering experience.

The registration fee for professional engineers, engineers-in-training, professional land surveyors, and land-surveyors-in-training is determined by the Board and must include the cost of examination and issuance of certificate.

Examinations. Oral or written examinations may be required by the Board and held at a time and place as the Board determines. Applicants who are engineers-in-training or land surveyors-in training seeking registration as a professional engineer or professional land surveyor must take the prescribed examination in two stages. A candidate failing an examination may be retaken upon payment of a fee.

Certificates of Registration. Certificates of registration must be signed by the Board chair, the Board secretary, and the Director. Certificates of registration and authorization expire on the last day of December. Renewal notices must be mailed at least 30 days before the end of December. Completion of 15 hours of continuing professional development per year is required for land surveyors.

Exclusions from Registration Requirements. Exclusions from registration under the Act include:

- the practice of a person who is a nonresident and having no established place of business in Washington, when the practice of engineering or land surveying does not exceed in the aggregate more than 30 days in any calendar year under a permit authorizing temporary practice;
- the practice of a person who is a nonresident and having no established place of business in Washington, or who has recently become a Washington resident, practicing or offering to practice for more than 30 days in any calendar year engineering or land surveying, if they file with the Board an application for registration and pay the required fee; and
- the practice of engineering and/or land surveying by a corporation or joint stock association subject to requirements including filing an application for a certificate of authorization. Any corporation authorized to practice engineering is responsible to the same degree as an individual registered engineer and must conduct its business without unprofessional conduct in the practice of engineering.

Mandatory Suspension of Registration. The Board must immediately suspend the registration of a person who is certified by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) as a person who is not in compliance with a support order or a residential or visitation order. If the person continues to meet all other requirements during the suspension, reissuance of the certificate of registration must be automatic upon the Board's receipt of a release issued by DSHS.

Summary of Bill: Board Membership. Members of the Board, in addition to being a resident of Washington for at least five years, must have practiced in Washington for the five years immediately preceding the member's appointment. The requirement that members of the Board be U.S. citizens is removed. The number of authorized pro tem members is increased from two to three, and the process for approving pro tem members is revised so that, upon request of the Board, the Director selects a candidate for a pro tem position and, upon approval of the Board, the Board chair makes the appointment.

Pro tem members may also perform services as needed and determined by the Director, including ensuring sufficient case reviewers and forming a quorum at Board meetings. An appointed individual must be registered under the Act or licensed in Washington to perform design services for on-site wastewater treatment systems for a minimum of five years immediately prior to the appointment, instead of being required to meet the same qualifications as regular members of the Board.

Roster Information. A requirement for the information in a roster of all registered professional engineers and land surveyors is changed so that the mailing address, not the place of business, must be shown in the roster.

Registration Requirements. The requirements considered as minimum evidence satisfactory to the Board that an applicant is qualified for registration as a professional engineer, structural engineer, professional land surveyor, engineer-in-training, and land-surveyor-in-training are modified. The eight years of experience must be broad-based and progressive to include, for professional engineers, gaining knowledge and comprehension of engineering subjects and applying engineering principles, and for professional land surveyors, applying land surveying principles.

An undergraduate degree in a non-engineering program may, at the Board's discretion, be considered the equivalent of four years of engineering experience, instead of being limited to two years of the experience. An undergraduate degree equivalent to a land surveying program approved by the Board is also considered the equivalent of four years of the land surveying experience. Experience may be granted for teaching and postgraduate education as further defined by, and at the discretion of, the Board, instead of teaching being considered up to two years of experience, and postgraduate experience being considered up to one year of experience.

Applications and Registration Fees. The requirements that an application for registration

must contain statements about an applicant's education and technical work under oath are removed. Registration fees determined by the Board must include the cost of application processing. It is specified that all registration fees are non-refundable.

Examinations. References to examinations being in two stages and being written, oral, or both, are removed, and it is provided that an applicant must receive passing scores on examinations required by the Board in rule. A provision that a candidate who has failed an examination may apply for reexamination upon payment of a fee is removed.

The Board must waive the fundamentals examination for applicants who meet the requirements as defined by the Board in rule, instead of waiving the fundamentals examination for applicants who have passed the National Council for Examiners for Engineering and Land Surveying Principles and Practice Examination, have met the experience and education requirements established by the Board, and are in good standing with the licensing agency in a jurisdiction.

Certificates of Registration and Renewals. A certificate of registration is not required to be signed by the Board secretary. Certificates of registration or authorization are valid for a period of time determined by the Board, instead of expiring and requiring renewal by the last day of December. The provision that notices must be mailed at least 30 days before the end of December is removed.

The provision that when any registered professional engineer or land surveyor fails to pay the renewal fee within 90 days from the date when it becomes due, the renewal fee is the current fee plus the amount equal to one year's fee. The Board may not renew a certificate of registration for a professional land surveyor unless the registrant verifies to the Board that they have completed the required hours, instead of at least 15 hours, of continuing professional development.

Exclusions from Registration Requirements. The following exclusions from registration requirements are removed:

- the exclusion for a person who is not a resident and has no established place of business in Washington practicing or offering to practice engineering or land surveying, when the practice does not exceed in the aggregate more than 30 days in any calendar year under a permit authorizing temporary practice; and
- the exclusion for a person who is not a resident and has no established place of business in Washington, or who has recently become a Washington resident, practicing or offering to practice for more than 30 days in any calendar year, if they filed with the Board an application for a certificate of registration and paid the fee.

Joint stock associations are removed from the exclusion for certain corporations and joint stock associations that practice engineering or land surveying, so the exclusion only applies to corporations. The corporation exclusion is also modified to specify that a corporation authorized to practice land surveying is responsible to the same degree as an individual land

surveyor and must conduct its business without unprofessional conduct.

Mandatory Suspension of Registration. The situations requiring the immediate suspension of a registration are modified, so that the Board must suspend the registration of a person who has been certified by DSHS to be out of compliance with a support order, rather than out of compliance with a support order or a residential or visitation order.

Other Provisions. The Professional Engineer's Account is changed to the Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Account. Obsolete language is removed and terminology is updated.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The bill does much needed updates to the Act. The experience requirements do not change, there is just more flexibility with the types of experience allowed. The bill replaces the citizenship requirement with the requirement to practice in Washington prior to appointment to the Board. The additional pro tem member allows the Board to cover all three professions with pro tem members as subject matter experts. The bill only allows the Board to change when the examinations happen.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Janice Zahn, Prime Sponsor; Ken Fuller, Director of BRPELS.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.