

TO: NSPE Board of Directors

cc: 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 & CEO

DATE: May 2, 2019

RE: Board Update: April 15–30, 2019

Championing the PE License

Grassroots support for eliminating PE exemptions. On Monday, April 22, NSPE’s Government Relations team sent an Advocacy Alert to NSPE members, inviting them to express support for a federal bill (H.R. 2139/S. 1097) to eliminate engineering license exemptions for work on public utility gas pipelines. And the membership responded! As of Friday morning, nearly 400 NSPE members had communicated with 800 members of Congress, urging elimination of the exemption.

If you have not yet taken action, please join your fellow PEs now by visiting the [NSPE Action Center](#) and clicking on the “Help Eliminate Engineering License Exemptions” link. It is urgent that your voice be heard to help build support for this important legislation!

Why licensure? A [recent article](#) from the Brookings Institute provides an interesting perspective. It characterizes two purposes for requiring a license or certification:

1. Public interest: These licensing regimes focus on the risks to public safety that may arise from unlicensed work and characterize licensing as a necessary policy response to such dangers. Engineering licensure clearly falls within this category.
2. Public choice: Characterized by Brookings as emphasizing “the self-interested behavior of practitioners who seek licensing to raise their wages at the expense of consumers; in its simplest version, workers lobby for licensure in the absence of any real safety risks.”

The pervasive attacks on licensure (which often sweep in the PE) are clearly based and motivated by concerns that too many occupations rely on the “public choice” purpose. A major feature of NSPE’s advocacy efforts

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](#).

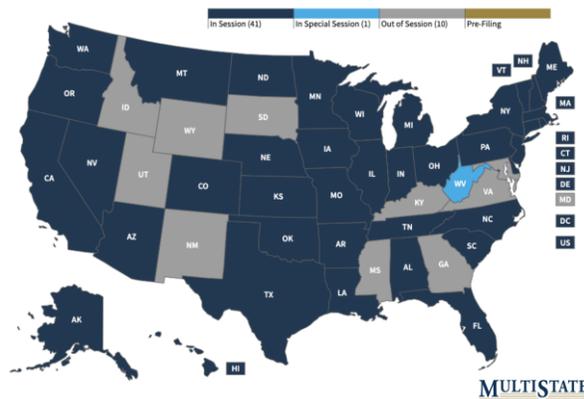
(including coalition efforts that include other “public interest” professions) is to ensure that the baby isn’t tossed out with the bath water. It is critical to our efforts to understand that when we speak of licensure, many in the public (including legislators) hear protectionism, not protection of the public. And to recognize and be forthright in ensuring that in its mission to protect the public, engineering licensure does NOT include bureaucratic costs, delays, or barriers to entry that can be perceived as serving no public safety purpose.

Good Samaritan bill signed into law in Maine. A [bill](#) that aims to protect engineers (and others) who provide voluntary services in the wake of a natural disaster was signed into law on April 22.

NSPE and Engineers Canada work toward international licensure mobility solutions. On September 24, 2018, NSPE submitted a [letter](#) to the United States Trade Representative regarding challenges that US professional engineers face in attempting to obtain licensure in Canada. That letter led to several high-level discussions between NSPE and Engineers Canada about the issues of reciprocity and mobility for licensed North American engineers.

As a result of those conversations, NSPE and Engineers Canada have issued a [joint statement](#), expressing their shared commitment to finding mutually acceptable solutions to

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licensure mobility challenges. NSPE appreciates the opportunity to advocate for mobility solutions on an international scale, and is looking forward to continued conversations.

Forty-two state legislatures remain in session, many with bills pending potentially impacting the PE license, and all of them potential sources of last-minute surprises in the rush toward

adjournment. Visit the NSPE “Threats to Licensure” [page](#) to see the known items on our radar screen and remain vigilant.

Ethical Guide to the Profession

Order of the Engineer shows increase in inductees. As reported in their latest newsletter, The Order has continued to see steady and increasing growth in engineers taking the oath.



STEM education should include focus on social impact of technology. In a recently published commentary, the website Qrius [argues](#) that “the dark side of the Internet, social media, and ‘Big Tech’ has become increasingly apparent in recent years,” with online platforms making it “easy to manipulate opinion, spew hate, and incite violence...One important way to address this problem in a systemic way,” the website argues, “is by reforming [STEM education]...to ensure that students learn to evaluate and respond to the social, economic, and political consequences of their work. *This does not mean adding existing humanities or social sciences courses to a STEM curriculum. Rather, it will require the development of an entirely new curriculum that gives the next generation of technologists, engineers, scientists, and mathematicians the formal foundations—including shared vocabulary and intellectual frameworks—for considering the macro effects of their actions on society.*” The values and accountability explicit in the PE have relevance beyond just our own community...and increased awareness of the importance of those values can only serve to increase the pool of potential future PEs.

Powering Professional Advancement

Upcoming webinars:

May 8: [Engineering Ethics – Emerging Issues](#)

May 29: NICET: [Developing a Qualified Workforce](#)

“Emerging Leaders” Highlighted at the 2019 Professional Engineers Conference: Do you or your state know of talented individuals just starting their engineering careers and looking toward a future of leadership? NSPE is excited to offer an opportunity for training—and discounted registration—at the 2019 Professional Engineers Conference, July 17–21, in Kansas City. Twenty winners selected as “emerging leaders” will enjoy half-priced

registration and will work through fun, challenging projects with the guidance of industry leaders. Through this unparalleled networking opportunity, winners will also get behind-the-scenes access to the keynote, and will attend valuable workshops in PECON's leadership track.

Learn more about the eligibility requirements and recipient commitments [here](#). The application deadline is June 1.

Uniting the PE Community

Third-quarter stats on website and social media indicate strong increase in member online engagement. Key findings from our extensive analytics indicate:

- Users, new users, and sessions have increased since the last quarter: users increased 13.15% (257,541 vs. 227,614), new users increased 13.93% (249,093 vs. 218,645), sessions increased 8.16% (350,117 vs. 323,704) and pageviews decreased 0.51% (817,993 vs. 822,176).
- Social traffic has increased since the last quarter: social users increased 142.83% (5,012 vs. 2,064) and social sessions increased 104.91% (5,338 vs. 2,605).
- 64.1% of the traffic to NSPE.org was the result of organic search (Google, Bing, Yahoo). The following key words were used in an external search that brought people to the website: national society of professional engineers, nspe, society of professional engineers, associations in alexandria va, national society of engineers, American society of professional engineers.

This is a strong indicator that NSPE's online promotion and search optimization activities are working. Individuals who don't know us by name are seeking and finding us.

- 257,541 users visited the website, generating 350,117 sessions, 817,993 page views.
- On average, users viewed 2.34 pages per session with an average session duration of 1.54 minutes.
- Returning visitors (16.8%) have decreased since last quarter (18.5%).
- Top ten landing pages (entrance paths): Code of Ethics (48,843 sessions); What is a PE? (39,929 sessions); homepage (30,146 sessions); National Engineers Week (27,548 sessions); How to Get Licensed (8,074 sessions); Licensure landing page (7,995 sessions); Join Now (7,866 sessions); Demonstrating Qualifying Engineering Experience for Licensure (6,914 sessions); Licensure FAQs (4,375); Ten Fun and Exciting Facts About Engineering (4,317 sessions)

- Most popular download: NSPE Code of Ethics for Engineers (11,748 downloads)



The March 2019 [NSPE Monthly Membership report](#) was distributed April 22 to the NSPE State and National Leader community. The assumption for the first year of the new business model was zero growth. It was a foundational year to make changes/improvements at all levels, add value, develop approaches, and reengage the partnership. With NSPE's major membership group expiring on December 31 (except for Florida, which has a February 28 expire date because of past difficulties in receiving funds from the state), we have historically seen the March/April time frame show us the lowest point of membership in a given year. The following trends have been identified. (This data excludes students and life members, and focuses on paid memberships.)

Overall Membership

The assumption for the first year of the model was to hold a zero impact on total paid membership numbers. As of March 31, that number is down an aggregate 4% year to date (YTD). Seventeen states have seen an increase in paying memberships YTD; five states have seen no change in the percent of paying members YTD. While membership count is important, overall dues revenue flowing to national and the integrated state societies is **ahead** of assumptions¹.

In the move to the new model, we anticipated an attrition risk for 23 states either due to an increase in dues or other reason (for one state it was the end of an extensive six-month-free membership program that would no longer allow “churn.”) Six of those states have actually shown net zero or positive impact.

Recruitment

¹ As of the end of April 2019, NSPE has remitted 7% more dues to state societies than it did in FY18. Note that this is an aggregate amount and not reflective of any particular individual state society, as it is highly dependent on tier placement. NSPE is on track to meet or exceed its FY19 budget, even with this increase in funds to the state societies, and is ahead of budget as of the end of March by 9%.

Twenty states have seen an increase in new members YTD for FY19 over FY18; six states have seen the same number of new members YTD FY19 over FY18.

Retention

The national average retention rate for individual societies according to the [2018 Membership Marketing Benchmark Report](#) produced by Marketing General, an association marketing company, is 78%. Forty-six (of 48) NSPE state societies are above the national average for retention. Of the two remaining state societies, one is still dealing with the impacts of a natural disaster and the other is seeing attrition due to an extensive six-month-free membership program (which has generally had a high attrition rate).

Market Penetration

An additional metric that is being followed is state-by-state penetration of the licensed individuals. Twenty-three states have seen an increase in market penetration since June.

April – June is the time for growth! We continue our direct mail campaigns and social media campaigns. We hope all state partners will do the same, especially with the many annual meetings taking place in that time frame.

Two tips:

- Let NSPE Marketing Manager Sean Woods, swoods@nspe.org, know if you need collateral materials for an upcoming event.
- Be sure to include messages about the 2019 15 Free webinars on your websites and newsletters so current members and potential members know to take advantage of the savings. For members on the fence about renewal or those considering joining, the \$299 dues price gets a lot more attractive if you view it as less than \$20 per continuing education hour needed for license renewal.

As NSPE continues the process of updating its strategic plan to more fully leverage the Society's strength as a unified and integrated network of national and state elements, we are pursuing an open, comprehensive, and intensive effort to ensure a planning and operational framework that maximizes strategy, business and operations, branding and messaging and value propositions.

This planning effort explicitly recognizes the three core customer bases that NSPE must satisfy in order to fulfill its mission: NSPE members, and potential members; NSPE state

societies; and NICET certificants, their employers, and potential certification services customers.

Today this is done through NSPE and its state partners' lines of business that include: membership; mission-driven activities; non-dues revenue generation activities including NSPE programs and NICET; and a variety of other activities. The overarching intent is to drive growth: growth through increased membership and participation (engaging more people and engaging them more fully); growth through increased profitability for national, state societies, and NICET; and growth in mission impact at all levels.

NSPE's updated strategic plan will identify and define the value the organization can provide to its customer bases that result in the greatest mission impact and growth opportunity at all levels: national, state and chapter. We are doing this through market and member intelligence gathering, analysis that reveals challenges and opportunities, assessing the capabilities of the current organization, and national and state leader discussion and decision-making.

You can check in on the planning process and history in the linked [timeline](#).

And remember, you always have access to numerous 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.

The [State and National Leaders](#) community page is not only a direct means of engaging, sharing ideas, and asking for advice from your peers in leadership across the country, it is your link to data, reports, and analysis on membership, programs and activities to better inform and support your leadership duties at the national, state and chapter level.

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](#)."