

TO: NSPE Board of Directors

cc: NSPE Committee, Task Force, Council and Interest Group Chairs
State Society Presidents/Presidents-elect
State Society Executives Committee
NSPE Past Presidents

FROM: Mark J. Golden, FASAE, CAE 
Executive Director

DATE: August 2, 2016

RE: Board Update: July 15-31, 2016

Tomorrow, Wednesday, August 3rd, NSPE, PEs, aspiring PEs and the public will mark first annual [Professional Engineers Day](#). (For an exact, to-the-second countdown to the event, just visit the [home page](#).)

We took advantage of the Dallas convention to collect photos from individual rank-and-file members explaining “why I became a PE,” and the number of these Instagram-able testimonials continued to grow in the weeks since. These sometimes serious, sometimes humorous, but always compellingly authentic images and messages were among the most regularly tweeted and re-tweeted items in social media channels¹.

Our state society partners also jumped in on the campaign to ensure its success, [securing official state or local proclamations](#), including²:

- **Kansas Society of Professional Engineers**, with the Governor signing a state resolution. Local resolutions were also secured in Manhattan, Kansas and Wichita, Kansas.³;
- **Ohio Society of Professional Engineers** with the Governor and Lieutenant Governor signing a resolution.
- **Louisiana Society of Professional Engineers** securing the governor’s signature on a PE Day proclamation;
- **Spartanburg, South Carolina chapter of the South Carolina Society of Professional Engineers** securing a PE Day proclamation read at a Spartanburg County City Council meeting; and

¹ The success of this aspect of the campaign demonstrates the multiplying effect of social media: the “Why I Became a PE” images were pushed out through NSPE’s social media channels, reaching the tens of thousands of members and non-members already within our universe of contacts; each time they were liked, re-tweeted or forwarded, the images entered the social media feeds of everyone in *their* circle of family, friends, and colleagues.

² These efforts are ongoing, and a complete list of state and chapter proclamations will be provided online and in my next update.

³ KSPE chapters are continuing to work for additional city and county proclamations.

- **Wisconsin Society of Professional Engineers** securing a signed state proclamation from the governor.

In addition to the proclamations, the Travis County chapter of TSPE has planned an amazing event for PE Day – [view here](#). If you are aware of other chapters holding such events, please let us know so we can be sure to thank them and keep an eye out for their participation.

This brainchild of NSPE immediate past president Tim Austin has clearly proved successful in raising awareness of what it means to be a PE, recognizing licensed PEs, and showing appreciation for the work they do each and every day. Plans are already underway to continue to leverage the impact of the day itself in coming weeks and months, as well as preparing for an even bigger 2nd annual PE Day celebration next year.

Championing the PE License

On July 26th, NSPE formally notified NCEES leadership and NCEES Delegates preparing for the annual assembly of state licensing boards of NSPE's opposition to proposed amendments to the *Model Law* and *Rules* proposed by the NCEES Committee on Uniform Procedures and Legislative Guidelines (UPLG). The amendment proposes that licensed structural engineers be added to the state PE licensure board, in addition to PE members (and land surveyor members as appropriate). NSPE successfully marshalled support to [defeat a similar proposal](#) at the NCEES General Assembly last year, and in our recent letter urged the organization to honor that decision and not proceed again with an action that would fracture the PE license. Moreover, given that the practical effect of the proposed amendments would be to redefine the fundamental nature of the PE license, NSPE pointed out that the committee's recommendations go well beyond the UPLG's charge, which had been limited to addressing inconsistencies and conflicts in the existing language of the *Model Law* and *Rules*.

In addition to the [letter](#) sent to all NCEES Delegates, national has asked the state societies to contact their state licensing boards to oppose this motion. NSPE President Kodi Verhalen will represent NSPE at the NCEES meeting in Indianapolis later this month.

President Verhalen and I will meet this week with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Utilities Service staff to address NSPE's complaints over portions of the final rules adopted for Section 306D Water Systems for Rural and Native Villages in Alaska. The substance of those rules challenged the value and integrity of the licensed professional engineer (PE) in such a way that NSPE felt it necessary to clarify the role that PEs can and do play in helping rural villages. Following a [joint letter](#) from NSPE and our Alaska state partner, the Secretary of Agriculture directed staff to meet with us.

NSPE has been advising and providing counsel to a state society (which has asked to remain anonymous, to avoid bringing premature attention to a potential, emerging legislative issue) regarding incidental practice issues pertaining to landscape architects. GR

staff has engaged the SSEC Community on this issue to help gather background information and develop strategy.

GR staff is also working with the Indiana Society of Professional Engineers on how to best leverage an opportunity with the Indiana Chamber of Commerce in August to increase awareness of the value of the licensed PE to the economy and public health, safety and welfare of Indiana.

Ethical Guide to the Profession

The Department of Agriculture/Rural Utilities Service meeting (discussed above) was necessitated by the “finding” of the agency that if a private professional engineer was permitted to determine whether a water system had exceeded its useful life and was in need of repairs or replacement, “there would be an incentive to prioritize the largest, most costly, projects to maximize revenues, rather than an unbiased prioritization of need.” This gross failure by a federal agency to recognize the licensed PE’s obligations and accountability serves to underline the need for constant and effective advocacy for and promotion of the license and professional ethics.

NSPE’s very influential NSPE Code of Ethics continues to be actively requested by a wide variety of institutions and organization as a reference tool to be included in their published materials and literature. Within the past few days, Rose-Hulman College of Engineering, McGraw-Hill Education, Cengage Learning, Norwich University and The Urban Transportation Monitor are just some of those who have requested NSPE’s permission to use the NSPE Code of Ethics.

NSPE staff continues to monitor the most recent events relating to the water crisis in Flint, Michigan. This past week, six state employees were criminally charged in district court in connection with the crisis, including employees of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette issued a statement, noting that “Some people failed to act, others minimized harm done and arrogantly chose to ignore data, some intentionally altered figures ... and covered up significant health risks,” he said. In April, Schuette announced felony charges against two Michigan Department of Environmental Quality officials and one City of Flint official. At that time, he promised more criminal charges would be forthcoming.

Powering Professional Advancement

NSPE’s chief staff operating executive for NICET Mike Clark has been asked by the Board of Directors of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE) to serve a 3-year term on the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). NCCA was established in 1987 to accredit personnel certification organizations in the US and Canada according to industry-recognized criteria, and is working with ANSI to harmonize their accreditation criteria with the ISO 17024 criteria.

Uniting the PE Community

As the board discussed on its call last week, in the period leading up to the annual meeting in Dallas, McKinley Advisors presented its research and working concept for an integrated, unified NSPE membership business model⁴ to the State Society Executives Council (SSEC) via conference call on May 25th. Following this presentation, McKinley conducted twenty-two one-on-one interviews with individual state executives and volunteer leaders.

Independently, the California society discussed the research and model and, on June 20th, communicated to national its full support of the integrated model and unified dues concept, as well as volunteering to serve as a pilot state to implement such an arrangement.

McKinley and NSPE membership staff met with the SSEC in Dallas on June 24th, reporting out on the concept-testing interviews and continuing the discussion on the working model. We were frankly surprised by the reception: there was a very high level of engagement from the SSEC and overall interest from most to try to make such a model work. That being said, there was and remains a small but significant group of state society executives who hold a firm and principled commitment to the Independent Model⁵.

The board was able to directly observe the House of Delegates strategic dialogue, [facilitated by McKinley](#), conducted in Dallas on June 25th. Again, there was a surprisingly broad base of consensus expressing support for the model concept, including comments from at least one of the current, state-only states expressing an interest in pursuing the working model for integrated membership. Again, however, while the consensus appears both broad and deep, *it is far from unanimous*. Even if a numeric minority, the intensity of commitment to a disaggregated model by those state societies who hold this view is very strong.

As the board agreed on its call, there does appear to be enough interest and support for a unified approach to push forward with perfecting a model and continuing to engage state and national leadership in its consideration. This second phase of the initiative will involve refining, advancing, and improving upon a feasible, integrated model approach supported by stakeholder buy-in and implementation/transition planning.

The period between now and the next, face-to-face board meeting (September 2016) will include follow up and continuation of ongoing dialogue and activities, as well as

⁴ Working Concept: A single, integrated membership structure and standardized bundle of local, state and national benefits; a consistent member dues price point, with the division of dues between national and the states commensurate with the level of services provided by each state; and streamlined administration, with national accountable for providing a “best in class” join, renew process and for delivery of dues allocations to each state.

⁵ Independent Model: “Organizations who share a common mission but are not materially related in structural, operational or financial matters; no membership reciprocity or joint membership requirement.”

development of a work plan, scope of work agreement and contract extension for continued support from McKinley Advisors.

Key elements of this plan will include:

- Developing a "study group" of eight to ten SSEC members and volunteers to help further evolve the model and investigate options for avoiding new state-only and/or state billing arrangements occurring during this window.
- Developing a plan for regular SSEC and volunteer state leader outreach and engagement throughout this refinement phase.
- Reaching a deeper understanding of the concerns of state-only states⁶, lower capacity states, self-billing states, and those with resistance to the changes being considered, in order to ensure that their concerns and needs are addressed in the model.
- Finalizing proposed model components, including pricing, financial impact forecasts, and capacity tier definitions/logistics.
- Defining an implementation plan and timeline, including a transition window during new model implementation that considers states with self-billing and/or are state-only.

Stakeholders have expressed a sense of urgency in finding and *implementing* a solution:

- That reverses current, negative revenue and membership trends;
- Achieves a sustainable long-term membership business model supporting the needs of *both* national *and* the states; and
- Increases the consistency, cohesiveness and simplicity of the membership offer and the delivery of member value.

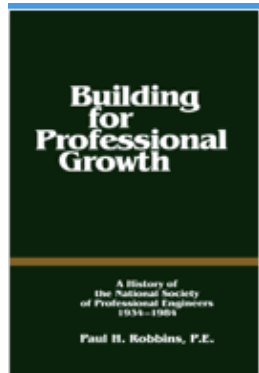
Given this urgency, successful implementation will require quickly building a critical mass of participating state societies, representing a substantial majority of NSPE components, *without* forcing undecided and dissenting state societies to make unreasonably rapid structural reforms or forcing a premature “rush to judgment” on whether to continue or abandon affiliation. As discussed on the board call, this will require the board to stand as champions of these proposed changes and refinements, and to help communicate the direct benefits of this model both for the states themselves and for strengthening NSPE as an organization.

Six state societies have formally adopted the new NSPE logo⁷, and have been provided new artwork. They are: California, Idaho, Michigan, New Jersey, New Mexico and Wisconsin.

⁶ This should include an opportunity for proponents of the Independent Model to make their best case argument for this model as an alternative to the Integrated Model and an open and fair consideration of this alternative.

⁷ As an aside, since the new NSPE logo was adopted by the board last year and unveiled in Dallas, a lot of people have asked, “What does the notch mean?” There is no profound or specific symbolism

Staff has been working on finding a way to ensure continued availability of former NSPE Executive Director Paul Robbins' history of NSPE's first fifty years, *Building for*



Professional Growth. It provides a rich and detailed accounting of the origins, evolution and impact of NSPE (as an integrated partnership of local, state and national organizations) in securing licensure laws, advancing ethical professional practice, protecting the public health, safety and welfare, uniting the profession, and creating such legacy assets as National Engineers Week and MATHCOUNTS. Fewer than 15 copies of the original, hard copy remain in NSPE's possession. The original sold for \$15 in 1984, and used copies occasionally show up on Amazon starting as low as \$35.

While hardly mass market, best seller material, it is too valuable a document and record of NSPE's heritage to allow to disappear. So we have worked to create a fully functioning eBook version, in the standard ePub format, and can be easily loaded and read on any eReader programs/devices.

It will be available shortly on Amazon for direct sale and download from the Amazon bookstore. We set the price at \$3.99, which is about the middle of lower end ebook prices on the platform. Sales entitle NSPE to a 70% royalty (or \$2.79 per copy sold), with no inventory, production, maintenance, fulfillment or other costs to NSPE. Once it is up on Amazon, we will use all the usual (primarily electronic) means to promote awareness of its availability and encourage our state partners to do the same.

Last week, NSPE directors should have received electronic calendar invitations for all face-to-face and conference call meetings for the year. If your online calendar doesn't play well with these automatic updates or you still rely on a hard copy planner, you can always view the complete calendar and agenda materials as they are developed in [BoardBookIt](#).

Following their electronic review by delegates, [minutes](#) of the June 25th NSPE House of Delegates General Assembly have been approved by unanimous consent (without objection by any voting member of the NSPE House of Delegates) with minor corrections.

And remember, you always have access to 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. Current board members can access an online library of board meeting materials (past, current and future) through the online board book site, ([BoardBookIt](#)).

to it. Since NSPE is all about the licensed professional engineer, the PE in the logo is stylized and in bold. The notch is an additional graphic element that points to the PE portion of our name and highlights the initials.

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](#)."