

TITLE 864 STATE BOARD OF REGISTRATION FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS

Economic Impact Statement

LSA Document # 25-478

IC 4-22-2.1-5 Statement Concerning Rules Affecting Small Businesses

The proposed rule does not impose new requirements or costs on small businesses under IC 4-22-2.1-5. The goal of the proposed rule is to expand pathways for individuals to become registered professional engineers, to reduce the Board's administrative oversight and simplify the examination process for applicants.

The proposed rule (i) expands the definition of an "approved engineering curriculum," (ii) updates the education and work experience requirements for registration as a professional engineer, based upon changes to the definition of approved engineering curriculum, (iii) amends the requirements for admissions to the examination to align with the updated definition of approved engineering curriculum; and (iv) provides the Board the discretion to waive the requirement that a comity applicant for a professional engineer license in Indiana (who has an active registration in another state and who otherwise meets all requirements for an Indiana license) has passed the fundamentals of engineering exam.

The proposed rule simplifies examination requirements, including removal of the timeline for reattempting examinations and refines the duties of the Board related to admitting applicants to the examination. Further, the proposed rule repeals the required filing dates to take the professional engineer examination, as the examination is now entirely computer-based and offered throughout the year and thus the filing dates are no longer applicable.

In recent years, candidates holding a doctorate or master's degree in an engineering discipline following a bachelor's degree in a nonapproved curriculum (a curriculum not approved by ABET, previously known as the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology) have been required to meet the educational requirements in 846 IAC 1.1-2.1-4. It is the Board's opinion that such candidates who have completed a doctorate or master's engineering degree from a school with an approved engineering curriculum have demonstrated education competency similar to someone with an approved bachelor's engineering degree that completes an advanced degree. Therefore, such candidates should be treated the same. ABET typically only accredits bachelor's degrees, so the definition of an approved engineering degree needed to be updated to include master's and doctorate degrees from a curriculum that has an ABET approved bachelor's degree program. By expanding the definition of "approved engineering curriculum," the review process for candidates with qualifying advanced engineering degrees will be streamlined.

Currently, the rule requires that all applicants for registration as a professional engineer by comity have passed the fundamentals of engineering exam. This acts as a barrier to allowing qualified professional engineers from being licensed in Indiana. Providing the Board with the discretion to waive that requirement when such applicants meet all other requirements for

registration, including education, experience and successful passing of the professional engineering exam, will increase the number of qualified professional engineers licensed in Indiana. Further, this proposed rule is needed to align with the national trend that removes state engineering boards from being required to approve and permit applicants with an approved engineering degree to take the professional engineer examination. Lastly, the proposed rule removes language related to examination filing dates to reflect the current computer-based examination process.

The proposed rule streamlines the process for engineers with advanced engineering degrees to become registered professional engineers. The proposed rule also facilitates the admission of qualified engineers by comity by allowing the Board to use its discretion to waive a requirement under appropriate circumstances. Further, the proposed rule streamlines the examination process for applicants by removing the Board's duty to approve and permit applicants to take the examination, unless the candidate holds a non-approved degree. The proposed rule makes the process of becoming a licensed professional engineer less burdensome and could lead to an increase in licensed professional engineers, which could help with any licensed professional engineer labor shortages in rural areas.

The proposed rule will remove unnecessary barriers to entry into the engineering profession. The benefits of the proposed rule outweigh any costs. The proposed rule will likely have a small, if any, fiscal impact on small businesses.