



April 5, 2017

Chairwoman Amy Volk
Maine Joint Committee on Labor, Commerce,
Research and Economic Development

Chairman Ryan Fecteau
Maine Joint Committee on Labor, Commerce,
Research and Economic Development

Dear Chairwoman Volk and Chairman Fecteau,

On behalf of the National Society of Professional Engineers and the Maine Society of Professional Engineers, we urge the Joint Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development to oppose repealing continuing education requirements within L.D. 1165 and keep the current continuing education requirements for professional engineers.

If enacted, L.D. 1165 would repeal continuing education requirements for professional engineers. According to the Maine State Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers, "The purpose of licensing professional engineers is to protect the public by enforcing minimum standards of education and professionalism. Fulfilling professional development requirements helps engineers stay current with technology and professional, managerial and ethical standards." Currently, professional engineers licensed in Maine must complete 30 professional development hours per license period.

Earning a PE license is just the beginning. NSPE and MeSPE believe that engineering education is, and should be, a lifelong learning experience. As stated in NSPE Position Statement 1737, "continuing professional development in a prescribed, but flexible form, should be a condition precedent for licensure and for periodic renewal of the license to practice engineering." **The universe of engineering knowledge continues to expand with time. Just as evolving technical precepts are integrated into classroom instruction, so too the practicing engineer must grow in knowledge to remain effective and competent.** Mandatory continuing education requirements, overseen and enforced by the licensure board, ensure that PEs continue to learn, grow, and benefit the profession and their own development, as well as protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

Currently, over 40 state licensing boards require that professional engineers maintain and improve their skills through continuing education courses. The number of states requiring continuing education requirements continues to grow.

If L.D. 1165 were enacted, Maine would put its professional engineers at a significant disadvantage with almost all other states requiring continuing education, endangering the public health, safety, and welfare, and possibly creating comity issues with other states.

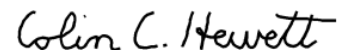
NSPE, MeSPE, and the professional engineers we represent have a foremost responsibility to ensure the public health, safety, and welfare in the practice of engineering. Fulfilling continuing education requirements is a crucial step in protecting the public health, safety, and welfare. We urge you to oppose repealing the continuing education requirements within L.D. 1165 and any legislation that repeals continuing education requirements.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comment. If we can answer any questions or respond to any comments, please contact Arielle Eiser, senior manager of government relations, at aeiser@nspe.org.

Sincerely,



Kodi Jean Verhalen, P.E., Esq., F.NSPE
President, 2016–17
National Society of
Professional Engineers



Colin C. Hewett, P.E., LEED AP
President, 2016–17
Maine Society of
Professional Engineers