

Legislative Bill 547 introduced by Senator Joel Johnson adds (5) five special interest members to the existing eight (8) member Board of Engineers and Architects. The five added members include: (a) local code enforcement official, (b) building contractor, (c) home builder, (d) municipal official (other than a local code enforcement official), and (e) a real estate broker or salesperson.

The (5) five added special interest members will outnumber the Architects (3) and the Engineers (4). Currently there is (1) public member. The added members could/would dominate the Board and decide rules and regulations affecting the Engineering/Architecture profession. In addition, this is a likely attempt to populate the board in anticipation of negotiated rulemaking by the Board regarding exemptions.

The hearing for LB 547, before the Health and Human Services Committee is scheduled for Friday, February 4, 1:30 p.m. Room 1510 State Capitol. The Senators serving on the Health and Human Services Committee include:

Senator Jim Jensen, Chairperson 402-471-2622  
Senator Dennis Byars, Vice Chairperson 402-471-2620  
Senator Doug Cunningham 402-471-2801  
Senator Philip Erdman 402-471-2616  
Senator Gwen Howard 402-471-2723  
Senator Joel Johnson 402-471-2726  
Senator Arnie Stuthman 402-471-2715

Please visit with or send a letter to your state senator or staff expressing opposition to this proposed measure. Some key points include:

- > This measure increase the number of directors on the Nebraska Board of Engineers and Architects by 83%.
- > The suggested additional directors are representatives of special interest organizations with no formal education or experience in the practice of engineering/architecture.
- > Board members, other than the public member, must be licensed in the appropriate profession.
- > All board members must promote the public welfare, not the interests or goals of a special interest group.
- > Conflicts of interest between public and special interest group must be avoided.
- > Currently, the Board members, other than the one public member, must be licensed in the appropriate profession. Nebraska architects and engineers are mandated to annually complete continuing education requirements to maintain licensure.
- > The Board is a regulatory body, those who regulate must understand the intricacies of the profession being regulated. The Board licenses architects and engineers on the basis of qualifications; board members must be able to determine who is qualified. Board members without similar credentials are not qualified to serve in this capacity.
- > The cost of adding five new board members is estimated to be approximately \$40,000 to 50,000 per year. Fees paid by licensed engineers and architects will not support this expanded requirement.
- > The size of state government is large enough without nearly doubling the membership of this Board.

For additional information – please visit the following:

<http://www.unicam.state.ne.us/legal/hearings.pdf>  
<http://www.unicam.state.ne.us/>  
[http://www.unicam.state.ne.us/pdf/INTRO\\_LB547.pdf](http://www.unicam.state.ne.us/pdf/INTRO_LB547.pdf)

Attached is some information I compiled that surveys other Nebraska Boards and Commissions. This information is interesting and clearly shows that adding six special interest members is an anomaly.

In consultation with Gordon Kissel (Kissel E&S Associates) and PEC, the following individuals are slated to testify in opposition to this measure:

Gretchen Livingston – Professional Engineers Coalition  
Loren Steenson – ACEC/N  
Dan Thiele – NeSPE

Thank you all in advance for your assistance with this matter.