

Protect Ohioans by protecting licensing for engineers

By David Martini

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As lawmakers in Columbus consider revising state workforce laws in 2020, they would do well to remember that professional licensing for advanced professions like engineers is rigorous for a reason. While unnecessary barriers to entry exist for some occupations in Ohio, policymakers should beware of broad, en bloc proposals [like the one published by the Buckeye Institute last month](#) that conflate “*certification*” with “*professional licensing*” for highly-complex, technical fields like engineering. Failure to make this distinction could have the unintended consequence of weakening Ohio’s professional engineers’ license.

Ohio engineers agree that some state agencies’ certification requirements for engineers could stand to be loosened or eliminated.

But as a licensed professional engineer for more than two decades and the president of the National Society of Professional Engineers representing 26,000 engineers, including more than 1,000 in Ohio, I am concerned that if Ohio’s professional engineer’s license is weakened, the public’s health, welfare, and safety would be placed in jeopardy. The public wants the professionals who design and build our airports, roads, bridges, and other critical infrastructure to continue to be required to meet rigorous standards of education, examination, and experience.

In public policy debates, distinctions matter. Thus, lawmakers should focus their efforts on problematic certification laws for engineers and protect the professional engineer's license.

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