

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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REPRESENTATIVE STEVE THOMPSON

House Bill 5 Sponsor Statement

“An Act relating to the Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land Surveyors and to the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development.”

HB 5 revises the statutes governing architects, engineers, and land surveyors in the State of Alaska, designating an investigator to serve specifically for the Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land Surveyors (AELS). Additionally, the bill allows for examinations to be given in formats other than written (i.e. computer-generated/electronic).

At the present time, one investigator serves part-time on the AELS Board while serving on six other Boards. The oversight for this investigator includes approximately 20,000 licensees. Last year, the AELS Board voted to expand the number of branches of licensure for engineers from the existing 6 branches to 15. This expansion will ensure inclusion of professions not currently regulated by the Board. The reason for the branch increase is to ensure the safety of Alaskans who work in these engineering professions (i.e. structural, environmental, nuclear, and industrial). As a result, the increase in branches could increase considerably the number of licensees that this one part-time investigator would serve.

While the workload of the investigator increases, so must his knowledge of the applicable statutes and regulations for the various boards. Hiring a full-time investigator would help to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of the AELS Board; thereby protecting the State of Alaska from risk hazards in public health, safety, and welfare. HB 5 opens an avenue for the AELS Board to maintain proper oversight of the licensees and to ensure compliance with State Statutes and Regulations.

Licensees pay a biennial renewal fee that is based on AELS Board expenses. Hiring a full-time investigator would increase the AELS fees by approximately five percent in December 2013 when the next fee increase is due to occur.

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