

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Senator Cathy Giessel

Senate Bill 16 – BD of Architects, Engineers, Surveyors By Request of the AELS Board

Sponsor Statement

SB 16 revises statutes governing architects, engineers, and land surveyors in Alaska, designating a full-time investigator specifically for the State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land Surveyors (AELS).

The AELS Board's mission, as defined in statute, is to protect public health, safety and welfare by ensuring that those entering the practices of architecture, engineering, and land surveying meet minimum standards of competency, and maintain those standards during their practice, by requiring licensure to practice in the state. The Board enforces the licensure and competency requirements and responds to complaints brought by the public.

Currently, the AELS Board shares one part-time investigator with six other boards that oversee a total of 18,095 licensees, of which 6,439 licensees are under the AELS Board.

According to the board, because of the negative economic conditions in various parts of the United States, a significant number of corporations and individuals are relocating to Alaska and many are practicing without proper licensure or knowledge of applicable statutes and regulations. In 2012 alone, the AELS Board added 490 new licensees to its oversight.

In addition to the already growing workload for the part-time AELS Board investigator, pressure on the investigator to spend time on the other six boards to which he is also assigned is increasing. The efficiency and effectiveness of the State's licensing investigation process is further reduced by only having a single shared investigator who must maintain knowledge of the various statutes and regulations of seven different boards.

SB 16 also removes the constraint that examinations for licensure be written. With advancements in technology, examinations are moving to an electronic format which will further increase efficiency.

SB 16 will better equip the AELS Board to maintain proper oversight of its licensees, thereby uphold the reputation and integrity of the disciplines within its purview, and ultimately ensure its ability to protect public health, safety, and welfare. I urge your support of SB 16.