

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Senate Bill 143 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.”

SB 143 revises the Statutes governing architects, engineers, and land surveyors in the State of Alaska, designating an investigator specifically for the State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land Surveyor (AELS).

Currently, the AELS Board shares one investigator who covers six Boards, which encompass approximately 15,000 licensees. Additionally, many engineering professions (or branches) were not previously regulated by the Board, including structural, environmental, nuclear, and industrial engineers. To ensure that the safety of Alaskans is being protected, the number of branches of licensure for engineers has been expanded from 6 branches to 16, meaning the number of licensees the Board currently monitors could increase dramatically (the AELS Board currently oversees more than 5,500 licensees).

In addition to the AELS Board’s growing workload, their part-time AELS Board investigator is facing increasing pressure to spend time on the other five boards to which he is also assigned. With an investigator required to maintain knowledge of the various statutes and regulations of so many dissimilar boards, effectiveness and efficiency is compromised.

Licensees pay a biennial renewal fee that is based on AELS Board expenses, and the impact to those fees would be approximately a 5% increase for the full time investigator.

The lack of a full-time investigator for the Board reduces its ability to carry out charges laid out in the Statutes and Regulations. Failing to fulfill those charges puts the State of Alaska at risk, and is a hazard to public health, safety, and welfare. SB 143 ensures the AELS Board can continue proper oversight of the licensees, remain in compliance with all Statutes and Regulations, and maintain the reputation and integrity of the professions.