

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND PERMITTING
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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February 22, 2023

The Honorable Mark M. Nakashima, Chair
and Members of the Committee on Consumer Protection
and Commerce
Hawaii House of Representatives
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Nakashima and Committee Members:

**Subject: House Bill No. 102
Relating to Professional Engineers**

The Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) **strongly supports** House Bill No. 102, which would explicitly allow professional level government employment performing lawful experience in review of engineered plans and calculations under the direct supervision of an applicably licensed engineer as qualifying experience for licensure as a professional engineer.

We are experiencing an engineering crisis. It is difficult to recruit and retain engineers, particularly for local government agencies that can't compete with private industry and federal agencies that can offer \$20,000 to \$50,000 more in salary. It is therefore important that we pursue alternatives to level the playing field for government engineers.

The DPP believes that professional level government engineering experience should qualify engineers for licensure because it entails a suitable and comprehensive standard of competency in engineering through the required review and approval of engineering projects under pertinent codes, ordinances and laws. This type of government engineering experience should be equally qualifying as non-government engineering experience, and is already allowed by the State of California.

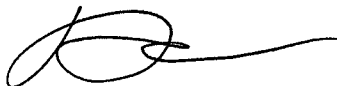
The DPP plans examining engineers play a crucial role in safeguarding the health and safety of our community. As local government agencies struggle to keep up, it is imperative that local governments are able to provide a clear career path for advancement of its engineers. For example, the DPP requires professional engineer licensure in order to be promoted to a supervisory engineer. A newly graduated

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engineering student would more likely choose working for the DPP knowing that they could qualify for licensure as they progressed in their experience with the department, rather than be uncertain if they'd qualify or have to leave the public sector for additional or different experience. This Bill would thereby provide greater equity to local government agencies and incentivize engineers to choose a career in public service.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dawn Takeuchi Apuna', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dawn Takeuchi Apuna
Director Designate

**Testimony of the Board of Professional Engineers, Architects, Surveyors, and
Landscape Architects**

**Before the
House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
Wednesday, February 22, 2023
2:00 p.m.
Via Videoconference**

**On the following measure:
H.B. 102, RELATING TO PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS**

Chair Nakashima and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sheena Choy, and I am the Executive Officer of the Board of Professional Engineers, Architects, Surveyors, and Landscape Architects (Board). The Board opposes this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to provide that a person having professional-level government employment performing lawful experience in review of engineered plans and calculations under the direct supervision of an applicably licensed engineer is eligible for licensure as a professional engineer.

The Board opposes this bill because it allows someone with insufficient experience to qualify for a professional engineer license; thereby, jeopardizing the health, safety, and welfare of the consumer, which is in direct conflict with Hawaii Revised Statutes section 26H-2¹. As the Committee may be aware, applicants must demonstrate the full range of the defined experience to qualify for licensure. The proposed amendment would allow a person who only reviews plans to satisfy the experience requirement to obtain an engineer license. A person reviewing plans and calculations may be aware of building codes, but they are not performing integrated design.

The Board respectfully requests that this measure be held in Committee to allow it the opportunity to discuss this matter with the City and County of Honolulu's Department of Planning and Permitting, all neighbor island counties, professional organizations, and other stakeholders. To address this matter, at its next scheduled

¹ HRS section 26H-2: https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/hrscurrent/Vol01_Ch0001-0042F/HRS0026H/HRS_0026H-0002.htm

meeting on February 28, 2023, the Board intends to form a permitted interaction group pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes section 92-2.5(b), to investigate this matter further and to seek input from all affected parties. Again, the Board believes further discussion and deliberation regarding this matter is necessary prior to enactment of any such measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.