



# **Stephen L. Nass**

Wisconsin State Senator

## **AB 60/SB 241 Engineer Title Protection Bill**

Testimony of Senator Steve Nass

Senate Committee on Labor & Regulatory Reform

September 7, 2017 • 300 Southeast, State Capitol

Thank you committee members for the opportunity to testify in support of Assembly Bill 60 and Senate Bill 241. These companion bills will prevent someone working in state service from using the title “engineer” when they do not possess the necessary credentials or education to identify as such.

Under AB 60, as amended in the Assembly by AA1, the title of an employee in the state classified service may not include the word “engineer” unless the individual:

1. Is a registered professional engineer with the State Examining Board of Architects, Landscape Architects, Professional Engineers, Designers, and Professional Land Surveyors; or
2. Possesses at least a Bachelor of Science degree in engineering.

The bill also requires each appointing authority in the state civil service to prohibit their employees from representing themselves to the public as engineers unless the employee satisfies the criteria described above.

I have been informed of situations at local meetings where a state agency employee identified themselves as an engineer only to find out that they did not have a degree or certifications. Other times individuals have the term “engineer” in their titles, however the title is not an official professionally recognized credential.

While the intention in these and similar cases is not to deceive, it does cause confusion for local officials and members of the public who may rely on a technical opinion or information provided by the individual thinking he or she has an expertise or credential that in reality they do not possess. Eliminating the over-broad use of the term engineer in titles will be more precise and reduce the possibility of confusion for the public

AB 60 passed the State Assembly earlier this year on a 96-0 vote. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this legislation. If any committee members have further questions, I am happy to answer them at this time.

*“In God We Trust”*

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# THOMAS WEATHERSTON

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 62<sup>ND</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

## **Testimony on SB 241 before the Senate Committee on Labor and Regulatory Reform September 7, 2017**

Chairman Nass and members, thank you for holding this public hearing on SB 241 companion bill to AB 60.

SB 241/AB 60 creates a statute relating an employee in the classified service may not include the word “engineer” unless an individual satisfies specific criteria:

- 1) Is registered as a professional engineer with the Examining Board of Architects, Landscape Architects, Professional Engineers, Designers, and Professional Land Surveyors; or
- 2) Earns at least a Bachelor of Science degree in engineering.

SB 241/AB 60 requires each appointing authority in the state civil service to prohibit his or her employees from holding themselves out to the public as engineers unless the employee satisfies the criteria described above.

When using the title or term “engineer” by a person in a state agency or public organization, the misuse in titling can cause confusion and misrepresentation when the public or local officials rely on expertise. The title should be only used by individuals that can demonstrate through education or state registration that they qualify and also have the expertise to have the title of engineer. Without education or expertise, individuals will continue to cause confusion and misrepresentation to the public.

Personally, I have witnessed cases in which, an individual presents his or her business card and identifies as an “engineer”. Through research, I have found that certain individuals do not have the proper credentials or education. The purpose of SB 241/AB 60 is to create a higher level of accountability and transparency to the public to ensure an accurate title of an engineer.

In the amendment that was put forth in AB 60, it has eliminated the need for a mathematics degree since mathematic course work consists of about 15% of the credits to obtain a Bachelor of Science degree in engineering.

Thank you again for listening and the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 241/AB 60.