

In this report:

1. Budget impasse in Hartford
2. Revisions to PE license statutes proposed
3. TEA-21 reauthorization in Congress

1. The first few weeks of the 2003 session of the Connecticut General Assembly have been raucous but without a lot of progress on the budget crisis. David O'Leary, ACEC/CT's lobbyist, reports that both sides remain far apart on reaching a budget deal that would close the state's \$650 million deficit for this fiscal year and the \$1.5 billion budget deficit for the next fiscal year.

House Speaker Moira Lyons announced a vote on the Governor's plan next week, which will likely be defeated. The Democrats will run their own plan which includes more tax increases than spending cuts. Governor Rowland has promised to veto any plan without equal tax increases and spending cuts.

The Governor's commissioners are all up for confirmation this year and some will have a difficult time being confirmed in this climate.

In this difficult climate, we remain vigilant to any proposals that would repeal the exemption on the sales tax for engineering services or a license fee increase. If you have not done so already, please contact your legislator in person, by phone, letter, fax or email to register your opposition to such moves.

In other news...

2. The Board of Examiners for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors and the Department of Consumer Protection has submitted a bill into the General Law Committee which would revise the PE licensing statutes to bring them more in line with the NCEES model law. The legislation would give the Board more power to impose fines and tighten up licensing requirements. One provision (section 12 of the bill) would require corporations registered with the Board to offer engineering services to have two-thirds ownership by PEs licensed in the state. CSPE will testify Tuesday afternoon in support of the legislation with the condition that existing corporations be grandfathered for this requirement. A copy of the bill can be found at <http://www.cga.state.ct.us/2003/tob/h/2003HB-05813-R00-HB.htm>.

3. Congress has begun work on the TEA-21 reauthorization. ACEC and NSPE are working with the House and Senate committees to increase funding for our transportation infrastructure. They are also advocating qualifications-based selection of consultants and opposing any moves to restrict outsourcing of engineering services. NSPE and ACEC are also working on clean water bills for this session of the Congress.

A list of the bill we are tracking is attached. You can view the text of a bill, find your state legislators and other information at <http://www.cga.state.ct.us/>.