

SIDE-SHOT FROM HARRISBURG

BY: BOB REGOLA, PLS (REGOLA CONSULTING, LLC)

Just prior to the summer recess and during the budget process, SB 403 was signed into Law on June 28, 2024. It is known as Act 32 of 2024. SB 403 (Licensing Update) removes an existing barrier to becoming a Licensed Professional Land Surveyor (PLS) and Professional Engineer (PE). This legislation makes the necessary updates to be more consistent with the national model law. Currently, for an applicant to be granted licensure as a professional engineer or a professional land surveyor, the applicant must hold an Engineering-In-Training (EIT) Certificate or a Surveyor-In-Training (SIT) Certificate and show proof of four or more years of experience in engineering or surveying work performed AFTER the issuance of the EIT or SIT Certificate. This legislation will allow the qualified experience to apply regardless of whether it was earned before or after the EIT or SIT certificate.

With the Senate and House getting ready to go back to work after the summer recess, I continue to have many discussions and attend several events. These discussions focus on our several legislative issues that we are advocating for, which are the following:

We are working on the State Plane Coordinate System Law. I currently have a sponsor in the House and Senate. Sample legislation has been supplied to me, and I have shared it with our people. Once I have the revised marked-up version, it will be introduced, circulated for sponsorships and assigned to the State Government Committee. This legislation will replace the current Pennsylvania Coordinate System Law, P.L. 1223, No. 161, Cl.76. An update of this law is necessary to provide users with a new framework of planar coordinates that are aligned to the new geometric reference frame (AKA horizontal datum) in development by the National Geodetic Survey (NGS) and to allow those users of the State Plane Coordinate System (SPCS) to update/modernize their data while maintaining compliance with applicable Federal guidelines. There is a plan in place by NGS to modernize the National Spatial Reference System (NSRS), which is the official definition of positional parameters including latitude, longitude, height, scale, gravity, and orientation throughout the United States. The new datum is known as the North American Terrestrial Reference Frame of 2022 and the final definition and acceptance is expected to occur in 2025.

Secondly, we are working on the Right-of-Entry. This legislation will be introduced by PLS in the 2025-2026 Legislative Session. This will grant surveyors and their subordinates the limited right-of-entry to the lands of others which are necessary to perform their work. This legislation will be similar to the West Virginia Law as referenced [here](#), with the following modifications: (E) Entry where no physical damage is done to property (1) in the performance of surveying to ascertain property boundaries, and (2) in the performance of necessary work of construction, maintenance and repair of a common property line fence, or buildings or appurtenances which are immediately adjacent to the property line and maintenance of which necessitates entry upon the adjoining owner's property.

Thirdly, another piece of legislation that has been introduced is the bill to re-authorize PA One Call for an additional seven years. Representative Rob Matzie is the prime sponsor of HB 2189 and Senator Lisa Baker is the prime sponsor of SB 1237. PLS will be monitoring these bills.

SIDE-SHOT FROM HARRISBURG - CONTINUED

Finally, PLS will be working on updating the Registration Law (Act of 1945). Once again, this will be introduced in the 2025-2026 Legislative Session. We will review and make necessary revisions to bring the profession to today's standards. This will address a lot of what we were trying to accomplish in Old House Bill 609.

PLS will be opposing SB 1226. This legislation would provide a licensure exemption under the Engineer, Land Surveyor and Geologist Registration Law for employees, contractors and agents of public utilities, electric cooperatives and telecommunications companies.

Utilities, electric co-ops, and telecommunications companies utilize both employees and contractors for field work including, but not limited to vegetation management, pole attachments, line construction and asset management.

Under current law, utility and telecommunications company employees are already exempted. This legislation would extend the exemption to their contractors and agents and include the related industries of electric co-ops and cable and broadband service providers.

With everything that was mentioned above, PLS will have a very active Fall legislative session.

House Session Schedule:

- Sept. 23, 24, 25, 30
- Oct. 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 21, 22, 23
- Nov. 12, 13

Senate Session Schedule:

- Sept. 16, 17, 18, 30
- Oct. 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 21, 22, 23
- Nov. 13, 14

With the amount of legislation that PLS is attempting to get done and to accomplish our agenda, we must continue to donate to the Political Action Committee (PAC). This will enable us to discuss pending legislation affecting the profession and allow us to protect the interests of surveyors. I encourage everyone to consider donating to the PAC so that we can protect our profession! Let's not forget that the PAC is our voice!! Please visit our website at www.psls.org to donate.



BOB REGOLA, PLS
STATE LOBBYIST, REGOLA CONSULTING, LLC