



SE Licensure Executive Summary

Submitted to the FBPE - 5/23/2014

Structural Engineering has developed as a distinct discipline of the broader Civil Engineering field. Most university undergraduate engineering programs continue to teach civil engineers with this approach by offering structural specialty courses as part of a degree in Civil Engineering. The current PE exam offered in Florida for engineers practicing structural engineering is also set up in this manner where the four hour morning session of the Civil-Structural exam broadly covers all of civil engineering, and only the four hour afternoon portion of the exam is focused on structural engineering.

Structural engineering as it is practiced today is much more detailed and complex than in decades past, and significantly broader than can be thoroughly tested in the 8-hour PE exam. Today's structural engineers must be knowledgeable in a variety of building materials and structural systems such as concrete, steel, masonry, wood, foundations, lateral loads, diaphragm analysis, lateral force resisting systems, and bridge design. The three major national structural engineering organizations (NCSEA, ASCE-SEI, CASE) and the NCEES have all recognized this and endorsed a 16-hour examination focusing solely on structural engineering. In Florida however, as in many other jurisdictions, only the 8-hour PE exam is required to obtain a PE license for all engineers, even those designing complex and significant structures.

The Florida Structural Engineers Association proposes to establish a Structural Engineer (SE) license that could be earned as a post-PE credential by those Professional Engineers who have demonstrated an advanced knowledge of structural design by passing the 16-hour NCEES structural examination. Passage of the rigorous NCEES exam would be mandatory following a transition period for PE's currently designing structures. The Florida Board of Professional Engineers would have the authority to define which structures would need to be designed by a licensed SE, and which ones could still be designed by a PE.

Over the first five months of this year, FSEA worked with members of ASCE-SEI, FES/FICE, and the FBPE SE Licensure Committee to explore all options for establishing an SE license / certification / endorsement in Florida. Ultimately these parties collaborated to define the language required to modify Florida Statute 471 to create an SE license. Enclosed with this summary are the results of that effort. FSEA plans to submit this proposed language to the Florida legislature for passage into law in 2015.

It is our desire for FBPE to endorse this language, and this approach, for establishing a higher licensing threshold for those engineers designing significant structures such that the health and well-being of the public will be enhanced.