



AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF PROFESSIONAL GEOLOGISTS

NORTHEAST SECTION

May 25, 2001

MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

S. 2383 Senator Marcellino

Licensure of Geologists

On behalf of the Northeast Section - American Institute of Professional Geologists (NE-AIPG) and its 560 member professional geologists throughout Northeast, this memorandum is submitted in support of the above referenced bill.

This legislation provides for licensing the profession of Geology and parallels similar laws enacted in a number of states throughout the nation. Licensure of the professions, including scope of practice limitations, should be reserved for those professions that truly serve to protect public health, safety and welfare. The role of the geologist is of such importance that licensure is warranted.

Geologists are routinely involved in matters pertaining to drinking water supplies, transportation, construction, mining, natural hazards, hazardous waste and cleanup programs, among others. The accurate determination of geological formations provided by professional geologists can be an important component of an engineering project.

The S02383 legislation will address the following issues **not** being met by the status quo:

Public Health and Welfare. Geologists routinely make decisions and offer opinions that directly affect public health and welfare.

Legal Responsibility. Professional licensure provides a positive legal responsibility and accountability to the public in matters that involve geology.

Qualification Assurance. Licensure assures the governor, state legislature and state local agencies that highly qualified geologists are available to work in the state. Licensure of geologists is an acknowledgement by the State of New York that, in the public interest, decisions regarding geological issues will be made by an appropriate qualified professional.

Consumer Protection. The public looks to geologist to solve problems relating to land use and management such as solid waste disposal, ground-water protection, contaminant investigation (e.g. Superfund sites), sea-level rise, development of potable water supplies and public works projects, to name just a few. Licensure is particularly important for a regulatory-driven or service-driven industry where there may be few tangible factors to evaluate.

Geologists evaluate natural resources such as oil and gas, and natural hazards like earthquakes, landslides, subsidence, erosion and flooding. Each of these examples have documented occurrence in New York State and their financial impacts can be measured in the tens of millions of dollars. Professional licensure is a credential by which New York State and the public can recognize the capabilities of a geologist to evaluate those resources and hazards.

For all of the forgoing reasons the NE-AIPG urges favorable consideration of this legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

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