

CHAPTER 2014-125

Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for House Bill No. 713

An act relating to engineers; amending s. 471.007, F.S.; revising qualifications for appointment of members of the Board of Professional Engineers; permitting a professional or technical engineering society to provide a list of qualified nominees for consideration for appointment to the board; providing for staggered terms and length of terms; amending s. 471.013, F.S.; revising requirements for an engineer license applicant who fails the fundamentals examination; authorizing such applicant who is delayed in taking the examination due to military service to have additional attempts to take the examination; amending s. 471.015, F.S.; revising requirements for obtaining licensure by endorsement; amending s. 471.017, F.S.; revising requirements for continuing education hours and license renewal for engineers; providing effective dates.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 471.007, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

471.007 Board of Professional Engineers.—

(1) There is created in the department the Board of Professional Engineers. The board shall consist of 11 members, nine of whom shall be licensed engineers and two of whom shall be laypersons who are not and have never been engineers or members of any closely related profession or occupation. A member of the board who is a licensed engineer must be selected and appointed based on his or her qualifications to provide expertise and experience to the board at all times in civil engineering; structural engineering; electrical or electronic engineering; mechanical engineering; or engineering education. ~~Of the members who are licensed engineers, three shall be civil engineers, one shall be a structural engineer, one shall be either an electrical or electronic engineer, one shall be a mechanical engineer, one shall be an industrial engineer, one shall be an engineering educator, and one shall be from any discipline of engineering other than civil engineering.~~

(2) Following expiration of the terms of members appointed to initiate staggered terms as set forth in subsection (3), members of the board ~~Members~~ shall be appointed by the Governor for terms of 4 years each. A professional or technical engineering society may submit a list of qualified nominees to be considered by the Governor for appointment.

(3) When the terms of members serving as of July 1, 2014, expire, the terms of their immediate successors shall be staggered so that three members are appointed for 2 years, four members are appointed for 3 years, and four members are appointed for 4 years, as determined by the

Governor. Each member shall hold office until the expiration of his or her appointed term or until a successor has been appointed.

Section 2. Paragraph (e) of subsection (1) of section 471.013, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

471.013 Examinations; prerequisites.—

(1)

(e) Every applicant who is qualified to take the fundamentals examination or the principles and practice examination shall be allowed to take either examination three times, notwithstanding the number of times either examination has been previously failed. If an applicant fails either examination three times, the board shall require the applicant to complete additional college-level education courses or a board-approved relevant examination review course as a condition of future eligibility to take that examination. If the applicant is delayed in taking the examination due to reserve or active duty service in the United States Armed Forces or National Guard, the applicant is allowed an additional two attempts to take the examination before the board may require additional college-level education or review courses.

Section 3. Paragraph (a) of subsection (5) of section 471.015, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

471.015 Licensure.—

(5)(a) The board shall deem that an applicant who seeks licensure by endorsement has passed an examination substantially equivalent to the fundamentals examination when such applicant has:

1.— ~~Has held a valid professional engineer's license in another state for 15 years and has had 20 years of continuous professional-level engineering experience;~~

2.— ~~Has received a doctorate degree in engineering from an institution that has an undergraduate engineering degree program which is accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering Technology; or~~

3.— ~~Has received a doctorate degree in engineering and has taught engineering full time for at least 3 years, at the baccalaureate level or higher, after receiving that degree.~~

Section 4. Effective March 1, 2015, subsection (3) of section 471.017, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

471.017 Renewal of license.—

(3)(a) The board shall require a demonstration of continuing professional competency of engineers as a condition of license renewal or relicensure.

Every licensee must complete 9 continuing education ~~4 professional development~~ hours, for each year of the license renewal period, totaling 18 continuing education hours for the license renewal period. For each renewal period for such continuing education, ~~4~~

1. One hour must ~~hours shall~~ relate to this chapter and the rules adopted under this chapter.

2. One hour must relate to professional ethics. ~~and the remaining 4~~

3. Four hours must shall relate to the licensee’s area of practice.

4. The remaining hours may relate to any topic pertinent to the practice of engineering.

Continuing education hours may be earned by presenting or attending seminars, in-house or nonclassroom courses, workshops, or professional or technical presentations made at meetings, webinars, conventions, or conferences, including those presented by vendors with specific knowledge related to the licensee’s area of practice. Up to 4 hours may be earned by serving as an officer or actively participating on a committee of a board-recognized professional or technical engineering society. The 2 required continuing education hours relating to this chapter, the rules adopted pursuant to this chapter, and ethics may be earned by serving as a member of the Legislature or as an elected state or local official. The hours required pursuant to s. 471.0195 may apply to any requirements of this section except for those required under subparagraph 1.

(b) The board shall adopt rules that are substantially consistent with the most recent published version of the Continuing Professional Competency Guidelines of the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying, ~~for multijurisdictional licensees for the purpose of avoiding proprietary continuing professional competency requirements~~ and shall allow nonclassroom hours to be credited. The board may, by rule, exempt from continuing professional competency requirements retired professional engineers who no longer sign and seal engineering documents and licensees in unique circumstances that severely limit opportunities to obtain the required continuing education ~~professional development~~ hours.

Section 5. Except as otherwise expressly provided in this act, this act shall take effect July 1, 2014.

Approved by the Governor June 13, 2014.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 13, 2014.