

November 10, 2023

The Honourable Danielle Smith
Premier of Alberta
Legislature Building
307 - 10800 97 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6

Dear Premier Smith:

Re: Concerns regarding Bill 7, and proposed changes to the *Engineering and Geoscience Professions Amendment Act*

On behalf of the CEOs of Canada's engineering regulators outside of Alberta, I am writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed legislation, Bill 7, which seeks to amend the [Engineering and Geoscience Professions Act](#) in Alberta. As you are aware, this amendment would allow technology companies and workers to use the title "software engineer" without holding a professional engineering licence from the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta.

While we understand the intention of supporting the growth of Alberta's technology sector, we urge you to reconsider the proposed changes. Our primary concern is that these changes compromise public safety, undermine public trust in the engineering profession, and jeopardize ethical and professional standards.

The title "engineer" is a protected term in Canada, restricted to individuals licensed by one of Canada's engineering regulators. Allowing unlicensed use of this title in the technology sector may mislead the public and pose inherent risks. The practice of engineering involves activities that require the application of engineering principles and concerns the safeguarding of life, health, property, economic interests, the public welfare, and the environment.

As the development of software and computer technology grows exponentially, it is more important than ever that the public be assured that those responsible for designing critical technologies, which impact public health, finance, and quality of life, can be held accountable for unskilled practices or unethical behaviour through a professional code of conduct and disciplinary actions. However, if Bill 7 is enacted into law, this mechanism for accountability could become unenforceable. Inaccurate uses of the protected title "engineer" can be misinterpreted and may mislead the public. Therefore, it is essential to maintain the integrity of this title to ensure public trust and safety.

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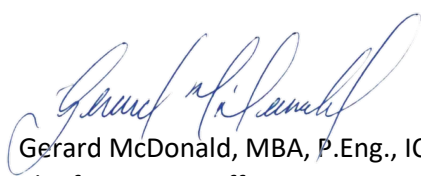
This is a national issue, and this decision sets Alberta apart from the standard practices observed in other Canadian provinces and territories. Furthermore, the proposed amendment which allows for the Minister to introduce further unrestricted regulations prescribing titles related to “software engineer” for similar title protection exemptions, could potentially open the door for other professions and industries to seek similar exemptions. This could extend beyond engineering, potentially impacting fields such as medicine and health, among others. This sets a dangerous precedent and might result in the weakening of professional standards, trust, and reliability of regulated professions as a whole.

All provincial and territorial engineering regulators across Canada are committed to enforcing the proper use of the engineering title. Misrepresentation, both in name and practice, is a significant concern. It’s not just about individuals falsely using the title “engineer,” but also about those practising engineering without the necessary qualifications or competency, potentially leading to malpractice that warrants investigation and discipline.

In addition, we empathize with the numerous students and engineering graduates who have dedicated four or more years to fulfilling the stringent academic prerequisites and gaining the necessary supervised experience to become software engineers. It’s also important to note that the path to becoming a licensed software engineer is not limited to those graduating from accredited software engineering programs. There are various paths to this profession, including those with science degrees or international qualifications. This inclusive approach allows a diverse range of individuals to contribute their unique perspectives and skills to the field. However, we are concerned that, over time, this exemption on the use of the title may lead future generations to question the practical benefits of pursuing a software engineering degree. This could potentially result in a future shortage of licensed software engineers, who are essential in addressing complex issues related to technological solutions for climate change, advancements in artificial intelligence, and innovative developments in the energy sector, all of which are vital for serving the public interest.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We are confident in your commitment to both the growth of the technology sector and the protection of public safety, and we look forward to discussing this issue further.

Sincerely,



Gerard McDonald, MBA, P.Eng., ICD.D
Chief Executive Officer

CC: The Honourable Rachel Notley, Leader of the Alberta New Democratic Party
The Honourable Nate Glubish, Minister of Technology and Innovation
The Honourable Rajan Sawhney, Minister of Advanced Education
Kimberley King, FEC (Hon.), Executive Director, Association of Professional Engineers of Yukon
Heidi Yang, P.Eng., FEC, FGC (Hon.), Chief Executive Officer, Engineers and Geoscientists British Columbia
Vince McCormick, LLB., Chief Executive Officer and Registrar, Northwest Territories and Nunavut Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists

Stormy Holmes, P.Eng., FEC, FGC(Hon.), Executive Director & Registrar, Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Saskatchewan

Michael Gregoire, P.Eng. MBA FEC, Chief Executive Officer, Registrar, and Secretary, Engineers Geoscientists Manitoba

Jennifer Quaglietta, ICD.D, P.Eng, MBA, CHE, PMP, LLSSGB, Chief Executive Officer & Registrar, Professional Engineers of Ontario

Patrick Savard, ing., MBA, ASC, Directeur général, Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec

Lia A. Daborn, CAE, Chief Executive Officer & Registrar, Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of New Brunswick

DS (Pal) Mann, P.Eng., CD, MDS, FCSSE, ICD.D., Chief Executive Officer & Registrar, Engineers Nova Scotia

Jim Landrigan, P.Eng., Executive Director and Registrar, Engineers Prince Edward Island

Mark Fewer, B.Comm., GSP, FEC(Hon.), Chief Executive Officer & Registrar, Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Newfoundland and Labrador