



# Professional Engineers Ontario

Rosario Marchese, MPP Trinity-Spadina  
Queen's Park  
Rm 156, Main Legislative Building  
Toronto ON  
M7A 1A5

March 31, 2006

Dear Mr. Marchese:

**RE: *Your comments in the legislature on regarding foreign-trained engineers***

*"As it relates to engineers, we know for example that they [PEO] insist that any engineer have one year of Canadian work experience before they work in Canada, no matter how much experience they already have. No effort has been made to deal with a profession that keeps foreign-trained, experienced engineers from getting the jobs they require -- such a waste of human capital."* - Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina) March 28, 2006

As the licensing and regulating body for engineering in the province, Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO) relies on the contributions of international engineering graduates. It was of interest that we read your comments in *Hansard* this week with regards to foreign-trained professionals, as we feel that the real story is not getting out to both the legislators and the public.

The reality is that there were more foreign-trained engineers licensed last year than Canadian trained. In fact, in its 84-year history, more than half of PEO's elected presidents were educated and trained outside of Canada. A similar percentage of professional engineers educated elsewhere volunteer on PEO committees, including those that assess the academic and experience qualifications of licence applicants. PEO recognizes the academic credentials of about two-thirds of the applicants, without having them write any additional exams. Where a technical gap occurs, applicants are provided with a customized program to enable them to demonstrate that they meet the academic requirements.

Your statement ". . . *they insist that any engineer have one year of Canadian work experience before they work in Canada*" is totally incorrect. One year of experience in a Canadian jurisdiction is a requirement for licensure; however, section 12(3)(a) and 12(3)(b) of the *Professional Engineers Act* provide exceptions for those who are not holders of a licence issued by PEO to engage in the practice of professional engineering. The exceptions do not apply to prevent a person,

- (a) from doing an act that is within the practice of professional engineering in relation to machinery or equipment, other than equipment of a structural nature, for use in the facilities of the person's employer in the production of products by the person's employer;
- (b) from doing an act that is within the practice of professional engineering where a professional engineer assumes responsibility for the services within the practice of professional engineering to which the act is related.

In summary, the engineering licence is needed to assume responsibility for the services within the practice of professional engineering. It is not a barrier to employment.

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We continue to work closely with Minister Colle and the key stakeholders dealing with internationally trained engineers.

Over the past 14 months, we have made several unsuccessful efforts to meet with you and the NDP caucus. We appreciate you and some of your colleagues attending our June 6, 2005 reception and would welcome a meeting with you at your earliest convenience.

Approximately one-third of Ontario's 68,000 licensed engineers were educated outside Canada, a testament to PEO's continuous efforts to facilitate the licensing of internationally trained professionals, while maintaining high standards to protect the public. Since 2000, applicants from over 1000 institutions world-wide have been granted licences by PEO.

As a result of combining credential review with assessment of prior experientially gained knowledge, we've almost doubled the number of P.Eng. licences granted to international engineering graduates in recent years, about two-thirds of whom do not have to write technical exams.

To help international engineering graduates obtain experience for licensure, we grant provisional licences to applicants who have met all the requirements for licensing as professional engineers, except the required 12 months work experience under a Canadian professional engineer. This provides potential employers assurance they are qualified academically and have demonstrated knowledge of the profession's high professional practice and ethics standards.

With these high standards in mind, PEO is committed to protecting and serving the Ontario public by ensuring all licensed professional engineers are qualified – and by licensing all who qualify. We're proud that qualified international graduates play a vital and growing role in the profession.

We will follow up with your office to arrange a meeting as soon as possible.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Allen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kim Allen, P.Eng.  
Chief Executive Officer/Registrar  
Professional Engineers Ontario  
(416) 840-1102

Copies: Hon. Michael Colle, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration  
Hon. Michael Bryant, Attorney General  
Howard Hampton, Leader, New Democratic Party  
David Zimmer, Parliamentary Assistant to the Attorney General