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for WEST-CENTRAL REGIONAL COUNCILLOR

REPRESENTATION FOR A NEGLECTED MEMBERSHIP

First of all, I call on all members to exercise their democratic right and vote. Vote to ensure you are not neglected. Vote for a Candidate that stands for issues that are important to you and a Candidate who is qualified to deal with those important issues in an effective and productive manner.

I am standing as a Candidate to represent engineers of West-Central Region in the PEO's Council and demand that members be engaged and consulted when new licensing requirements are placed on us. Aren't we supposed to be self-governing? In the past several years, I observed from the sidelines, attended chapter events and engaged the past Council candidates on issues that I considered important and vital for members. However, the events of the past couple of years taught me that if we want to see improvements, we have to get involved at the strategic level, as members of the Council. When the members of West-Central Region collectively decides through their vote that I be their voice in the Council; I will give the following three issues the highest priority.

- **Financial Accountability:** PEO's spending addiction has resulted in 2019's 20% fee increase, passed without member consultation or approval. On March 22, 2019 during Council's 525th Meeting, Ms. Lisa MacCumber (the incumbent) seconded a motion and voted in favour of increasing all fees collected by PEO, including the licensing and Certificate of Authorization fees, by 20%. The sitting Council also declared, "[the fees] are effective immediately, without member confirmation required!"

PEO's revenue in 2018 was about \$25.0M (2018 Annual Report), and it had a surplus of revenue over expenditure! Why then increase the fees?

Those in favour of the fee increase simply said that this was required to adjust the fees to inflation since 2008. It is true that inflation in Canada between 2008 and 2018 has been about 17%. But, what they ignored or didn't bother to investigate was that PEO's revenues have been increasing by about 2% annually since 2008, exceeding the rate of inflation. PEO's membership has increased by about 23%, from about 69,000 in 2008 to about 85,000 in 2019. Besides, with about 85,000 members, PEO (about 10 times larger than the membership in Manitoba) has the economy of scale.

Instead of increasing the fees, PEO should implement waste cutting and spend only on activities that are aligned with PEO's mandate. According to Mr. David Brown (PEO's former President) increases in cost of consultants and scope creep in PEO's operation have been factors in increasing operational cost!

Increasing the financial burden of membership instead of reducing waste is not serving the interest of the members. I will bring engineering precision and solid business and management experience to review PEO's financial position and direct the management to optimize the use of PEO's monetary resources. Our members' money needs to be used more wisely!

- **Empowering members to practise engineering:** While PEO's mandate is to protect the interest of the public, it does not mean that it should create unnecessary obstacles for members to provide engineering services to the public. PEO should make sure that only those who are qualified are licensed to practise. However, once licensed, members should be able to provide engineering services without them having to be an employee of a big corporation or having to incur large costs and overhead to incorporate and register more than once.

Both the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario made commitments and acted on those commitments to make it easier for small businesses to form and operate. It is for the same reason that in 2010 through the **Open for Business Act, 2010 (Bill 68)**, the Professional Engineers Act (PEA) was amended to empower PEO to improve its self-governing practices and fee structure to make it more efficient for engineers to practise in Ontario. Contrary to the expectation of the Government of Ontario, PEO not only has not removed the barrier for small engineering businesses, on March 22, 2019 it raised the barrier even higher.

When get elected to the Council, I will work to ensure that PEO acts in accordance with the PEA without being excessive or ambivalent to the barriers that Council's decisions would create. According to PEA, *"The principal object of the Association [PEO] is to regulate the practice of professional engineering and to govern its members ... in order that the public interest may be served and protected."*

I would ask, when an individual licensed Engineer provides engineering services in line with the principal objectives of the PEA and PEO's Code of Ethics, how does the Certificate of Authorization and the associated fees enhance our ability to serve and protect the interest of the public?

• **Bring the voice of members to Council:** It is becoming common practice at PEO that we, the members, are subject to major new requirements without being consulted. Whatever happened to self-governance? Since 1922, we have always protected the public interest fully and faithfully. Self-government works!

The Council, through its act of increasing the fees and declaring that the member will not be consulted, has demonstrated that no care or consideration will be given to the members' opinion. The members are not asked or given an opportunity or platform to express their views on issues that have deep and long-term financial and practice implication on them.

This has to change. It is on us, the members, to be active and raise our voices by getting engaged and vote in election. On the other hand, and the most important, it is on the Council to provide the means and platform for the members to engage each other and the Council on issues that affect their ability to practise engineering.

I am the candidate who is qualified and motivated to champion on behalf of the members for "consistency, clarity and efficiency in regulatory processes and decisions" and to "augment the applicant and licence holder experience."