

September 24, 2018

Ambassador Robert E. Lighthizer
Office of the United States Trade Representative
600 17th St., NW
Washington, DC 20006

RE: Docket Number USTR-2018-0029, Comments Regarding Foreign Trade Barriers to U.S. Exports for 2019 Reporting

Dear Ambassador Lighthizer,

This letter is in reference to the August 24, 2018 Federal Register notice from the Office of the United States Trade Representative regarding the National Trade Estimate Report on Foreign Trade Barriers (83 FR 42966).

On behalf of the more than 31,000 members of the National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE), I want to draw your attention to an unusual discrepancy in professional engineering licensure requirements between the United States and Canada.

Like the United States, Canada allows individual jurisdictions to develop their own requirements for applying for and obtaining a professional engineering license. Unlike most of the United States, however, Canadian provinces have work requirements that can only be fulfilled in Canada.

Each of the twelve Canadian provinces includes a requirement for at least one (1) year of engineering work to be completed in Canada before an engineer licensed in another country can apply to become a Professional Engineer. This discriminatory licensing requirement restricts participation of many Professional Engineers licensed in the United States. They are prohibited from practicing as licensed engineers in Canada, despite having amassed extensive engineering experience and proficiency outside of Canada.

The only exceptions to this requirement are in British Columbia, which recognizes *Engineers Canada's* mutual recognition agreements (MRA) with Hong Kong, Ireland and Australia¹, and in Saskatchewan, which recognizes the MRA with the state of Texas.² Currently, Canada has MRA's with only two states – Texas and Nevada.³ Professional Engineers from other states face unreasonable restrictions on their ability to become licensed in Canadian provinces and territories.

¹ <https://www.egbc.ca/Registered-in-Australia-Hong-Kong-or-Ireland>

² <https://www.apegs.ca/Portal/Pages/international-mobility-united-states> (Option 2 - Temporary License)

³ <https://engineerscanada.ca/become-an-engineer/international-mobility-of-engineers/mutual-recognition-agreements>

As the United States Trade Representative continues its negotiations with Canada, in efforts to reach a mutually beneficial trade agreement, the NSPE respectfully asks you to consider including Professional Engineering licensure reciprocity in your discussions. We believe the Arizona statute provides instructive model language for an MRA between Canada and the United States. It states that Professional Engineering applicants must provide evidence of work experience “attained under the direct supervision of a professional who is satisfactory to the board and registered in this state, another state or a foreign country in the profession in which the applicant is seeking registration.”⁴

As the United States and Canada continue to enjoy a mutually beneficial economic relationship, NSPE and its members believe Professional Engineers can and should be a productive part of that relationship. A Mutually Recognized Agreement between the two nations would ensure that both are able to enjoy the benefits of shared technical knowledge and expertise, while continuing to protect the public health, safety and welfare.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Aitken". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael Aitken, PE, F.NSPE
President

⁴ ARS §32-122.01 <https://law.justia.com/codes/arizona/2005/title32/00122-01.html>