ACEC
American Council of Engineering Companies
of Michigan

October 28, 2025

The Honorable Mike Hoadley, Chair
Committee on Economic Competitiveness
Michigan House of Representatives
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Re: HB 4913

Dear Chair Hoadley and Honorable Members of the Committee on Economic Competitiveness:

On behalf of the American Council of Engineering Companies of Michigan (ACEC/Michigan), I write to express our strong opposition to House Bill 4913. As the organization representing hundreds of engineering firms and thousands of licensed professional engineers committed to maintaining excellence in engineering practice, we urge the Committee to reject this legislation, which would undermine educational standards, professional competence, and the safety of Michigan's infrastructure and communities.

House Bill 4913 seeks to amend the Occupational Code (MCL 339.2004) by introducing equivalents to the required baccalaureate degree in engineering for licensure as a professional engineer. While the bill preserves other requirements and good moral character, expanding educational options could lead to inconsistencies in training—prioritizing accessibility over the standardized preparation essential for public protection. Introduced on September 11, 2025, and currently pending before your committee, this proposal disregards the foundational role of accredited education in ensuring engineers are competent, qualified and equipped to deliver safe, reliable designs.

Public Safety and Professional Oversight at Risk

Baccalaureate degrees from programs recognized by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) provide comprehensive training in technical skills, ethics, and safety principles critical to engineering. These programs ensure graduates can

competently address complex challenges in infrastructure—such as bridges, airports, roads, water/wastewater systems, and energy projects—that directly impact public health and welfare. Allowing equivalents risks variability in foundational knowledge, potentially resulting in inadequate preparation and increased errors in practice, which could lead to structural failures, public health risks, environmental hazards, or costly rework.

The House Fiscal Agency's analysis notes an indeterminate fiscal impact, suggesting potential revenue from more licensees but overlooking long-term consequences, such as heightened litigation or safety incidents stemming from less-prepared professionals. Our member firms, which oversee Michigan's critical infrastructure, understand that ABET-accredited education is vital to upholding standards that have protected residents for generations and should be a baseline for preparedness for licensure.

Alignment with National Standards

Michigan's current requirements align with the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) Model Law, which mandates an ABET-accredited bachelor's degree as the minimum standard path to Professional Engineer (PE) licensure to ensure uniform competence. Most states follow this model, requiring ABET accreditation with limited equivalents. Equivalents are typically engineering degrees from non-ABET accredited programs. Broadening equivalents in Michigan to allow an alternative to an engineering degree would misalign the state with these norms, complicating reciprocity for engineers practicing across state lines and potentially lowering the bar for entry into a profession where mistakes carry high stakes.

Firm licensure or Certificates of Authorization (COAs), required in 40 states, are often tied to these education standards, emphasizing the importance of licensed responsible charge.

Broader Professional Perspectives

NCEES and other engineering bodies emphasize the importance of obtaining engineering degrees for public safety, as they guarantee exposure to core curricula in mathematics, sciences, and engineering principles—complemented by ethical training. While equivalents may aim to address perceived workforce shortages, they risk eroding confidence in the PE credential. Weakening education requirements could lead to gaps in critical knowledge necessary to solve real-world problems and produce safe, reliable designs. ACEC/Michigan urges preserving Michigan's alignment with national practices to help ensure the health, safety and welfare of the public.

We respectfully request that the Committee **not** advance HB 4913. We are available to provide further testimony or additional information at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Ron Brenke

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cc: The Honorable Matt Hall, Speaker of the Michigan House of Representatives
The Honorable Bill G. Schuette, Chair, House Rules Committee