

FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FINAL BILL ANALYSIS

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BILL #: CS/HB 839 TITLE: Unlicensed Practice of Engineering SPONSOR(S): Melo	COMPANION BILL: CS/CS/SB 800 (Mayfield) LINKED BILLS: None RELATED BILLS: None
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FINAL HOUSE FLOOR ACTION: 111 Y's 1 N's **GOVERNOR'S ACTION:** Pending

SUMMARY

Effect of the Bill:

The bill establishes an escalating fine schedule for subsequent violations of engaging in the unlicensed practice of engineering.

Fiscal or Economic Impact:

Indeterminate. The bill may have an indeterminate impact on state government and the private sector.

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ANALYSIS

EFFECT OF THE BILL:

CS/HB 839 passed as [CS/CS/SB 800](#).

The bill establishes an escalating fine schedule for subsequent violations of engaging in the [unlicensed practice of engineering](#). The escalating fees are as follows:

- For a second violation, a fine of \$10,000.
- For a third violation, a fine of \$15,000.
- For a fourth violation, a fine of \$20,000.
- For a fifth and any subsequent violation, a fine of \$25,000. (Section 1)

Subject to the Governor's veto powers, the effective date of this bill is July 1, 2026. (Section 2)

FISCAL OR ECONOMIC IMPACT:

STATE GOVERNMENT:

The bill may have an indeterminate positive fiscal impact on state revenues due to increased fines.

PRIVATE SECTOR:

The bill would require individuals who engage in the unlicensed practice of engineering to pay increased fines for subsequent violations.

RELEVANT INFORMATION

SUBJECT OVERVIEW:

Professional Engineering

An engineer is an individual who is licensed to practice engineering. An engineer intern is an individual who has graduated from an engineering curriculum approved by the Florida Board of Professional Engineers and has passed the fundamentals of engineering examination.

The [practice of engineering](#) includes professional services that require specialized education, training, and experience in applying mathematical, physical, and engineering sciences. The term encompasses activities such as

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consultation, planning, design, evaluation, teaching, surveying, and construction inspection related to public or private works, utilities, systems, and products that affect life, health, or property.¹

The practice of engineering is regulated by the Florida Board of Professional Engineers (Board) under the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) Division of Professions.² The Board is responsible for reviewing applications, administering exams, licensing qualified applicants, and regulating and enforcing the proper practice of engineering in the state.³

The Florida Engineers Management Corporation

The administrative, investigative, and prosecutorial services for the Board are administered by the Florida Engineers Management Corporation (FEMC).⁴ The FEMC is a non-profit, single purpose corporation that operates through a contract with DBPR. The FEMC may hire staff as needed to carry out its functions.⁵ Funds for the FEMC are allocated through appropriations from the Professional Regulation Trust Fund.⁶ The FEMC is required to submit quarterly and annual reports on its activities and financial status to the Secretary of the DBPR, the Board, and the Legislature.⁷

Licensure Requirements

In Florida, to qualify for licensure as a professional engineer, an individual must have passed both the fundamentals examination and the principles and practices examination. Prior to being permitted to sit for the fundamentals examination, an applicant must have graduated from an approved engineering science or engineering technology curriculum of four years or more in a Board-approved school, college, or university.⁸

The Board must certify for licensure any applicant who has submitted proof of being at least 18 years old, and having the required engineering experience. For graduates of an approved engineering science curriculum, the applicant must have a record of at least four years of active engineering experience sufficient to indicate competence to be in responsible charge of engineering. Graduates of an approved engineering technology curriculum must have a record of at least six years of such qualified experience.⁹

The FEMC must issue a license to any applicant who the board certifies is qualified to practice engineering and who has passed the required examinations.¹⁰

Unlicensed Practice of Engineering

In Florida, individuals who are not licensed by the Board are prohibited from engaging in the practice of engineering.¹¹ Any individual who practices engineering without a license commits a first degree misdemeanor.¹² As a result of a violation for unlicensed activity, the Board may issue:¹³

- A notice to cease and desist.
- A citation, which includes a fine.

¹ [S. 471.005\(7\), F.S.](#)

² [S. 20.165\(4\)\(a\)11, F.S.](#)

³ Florida Board of Professional Engineers, *About the Florida Board of Professional Engineers*, <https://fbpe.org/about/about-fbpe/> (last visited Feb. 9, 2026).

⁴ [S. 471.038\(3\), F.S.](#)

⁵ Id.

⁶ [S. 471.038\(3\)\(j\)3, F.S.](#)

⁷ [S. 471.038\(3\)\(m\), F.S.](#)

⁸ [S. 471.013, F.S.](#)

⁹ [S. 471.015\(2\), F.S.](#)

¹⁰ [S. 471.015\(1\), F.S.](#)

¹¹ [S. 471.031, F.S.](#)

¹² [S. 471.031\(2\), F.S.](#)

¹³ Florida Board of Professional Engineers, *Unlicensed Activity Affects Everyone*, January, 2018, available at <https://fbpe.org/unlicensed-activity-affects-everyone/> (last visited Feb. 9, 2026).

- An administrative complaint, which may include a recommended fine, injunctive proceedings if the action continues, and criminal prosecution.

Further, the Board is authorized to impose a fine of up to \$5,000 for each count or separate offense on any individual found guilty of, among other violations, engaging in the unlicensed practice of engineering.¹⁴ Additionally, Rule 61G15-19.004 of the Florida Administrative Code, provides the following penalties for the unlicensed practice of engineering:

VIOLATION	PENALTY RANGE		
	FIRST VIOLATION	SECOND VIOLATION	THIRD OR SUBSEQUENT VIOLATION
Practicing engineering without a license or using a name or title tending to indicate that such person holds an active license as an engineer.	In addition to referral to the State Attorney’s Office and denial of future application for licensure, a \$1,000 fine to a \$2,500 fine.	In addition to referral to the State Attorney’s Office, a \$2,500 fine to a \$5,000 fine.	In addition to referral to the State Attorney’s Office, a \$5,000 fine.

As part of the FEMC’s quarterly reports, the Board provides regular updates on incidents of unlicensed practice of engineering in Florida. In the first quarter of 2025-26, the Board received 13 complaints alleging unlicensed activity, four of which were deemed legally sufficient.¹⁵

¹⁴ [S. 471.033, F.S.](#)

¹⁵ See Florida Board of Professional Engineers, Quarterly Reports, *2025-26 Florida Engineers Management Corporation 1st Quarter Report*, p. 74, available at <https://fbpe.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/2025-26-1st-Quarter-FEMC-Report.pdf>.