

August 2026

Honorable Kathy Hochul, Governor
Executive Chamber, State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224



RE: Oppose Change to New York's Geologist Licensure Standard

Dear Governor Hochul,

As a member of the New York State Public Employees Federation (PEF), I urge you to veto legislation recently passed by both houses of the State Legislature that would require individuals seeking licensure as a geologist to have completed a bachelor's degree (S.6482 by Sen. Webb/A.5622 by Asm. Eachus).

This legislation would require all individuals seeking licensure as a geologist to have completed a bachelor's degree. This legislation falsely assumes that a bachelor's degree is the baseline measurement demonstrating competency in the field of geology.

Under current law, there are two separate tracks available to become a licensed geologist in New York State. Someone without a bachelor's degree, but who has 12 years of professional experience as approved by the New York State Office of the Professions, may work to become a licensed professional geologist in New York. In addition to demonstrating practical experience approved by the Office of Professions, all individuals must also pass two (2) separate exams for licensure regardless of their formal educational experience: the National Association of State Boards of Geology (ASBOG) Fundamentals of Geology (FG) and Principles of Geology (PG) exams. If such individuals do not have the requisite 12 years of practical experience as approved by the Office of the Professions AND/OR cannot pass the FG or PG exams, then they are ineligible for licensure.

While it is unusual for individuals to secure licensure as a geologist without completing a bachelor's degree, no specific issue or problem has been identified impairing the public health and safety with the current licensure process that recognizes long-term practical experience in the field. In addition, this legislation unnecessarily requires individuals to expend time and resources to obtain a bachelor's degree when they may already have many years of hands-on, practical experience in the field and have demonstrated their mastery of the practice of geology on two professional examinations.

Given the rigorous examination and practical experience required under current law, this change would unnecessarily and arbitrarily impair the ability of individuals with long-standing practical experience from demonstrating their expertise on the required means and/or seeking licensure as a geologist. Moreover, this legislation could also impair the ability of current state employees in geologist trainee or assistant geologist positions who do not have a bachelor's degree, but who have passed the FG exam, from advancing further in their careers despite demonstrating competency in the field. It would further contradict the Department of Civil Service's recent actions allowing professional experience to substitute degree requirements for thousands of civil service titles, an effort which has improved accessibility to civil service careers.

It is for these reasons that I urge you to veto this legislation.

Sincerely,

Name: _____

Address: _____

Signature: _____