



Minutes
Nevada Geographic Information Society (NGIS)
July 2017 Special Board Meeting
July 6, 2017
APPROVED

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by NGIS President Gary Zaepfel at 3:05 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: Gary Zaepfel, Don Harper, Karin Hagan, Sue Buto, Moni Fox, Eric Schmidt, Jennifer Vican, Andrea Adams, Polly Boardman, Jorge Morteo.

Not Present: Karla Chavez.

Guests –None

*****As Federal employees, Don Harper and Sue Buto recused themselves from this discussion.*****

The purpose of this Special Board Meeting was to discuss Senate Bill S. 1253, introduced to the Senate on May 25, 2017, by Mr. Hatch (R-Utah), Mr. Warner (D-Virginia), Mr. Heller (R-Nevada), and Mr. Wyden (D-Oregon). The full text of the bill can be found at <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/1253>.

Discussion in turn

Eric – Eric said that he has reviewed the document, rebuttals and opinions. He has asked his county’s district attorney representative to review, and the representative had no concerns about impacts to the county. Eric noted that the bill has been refined since it was first introduced, and he appreciates that the scope of the bill has been refined. He noted that the bill really impacts Federal agencies only. He likes what the bill is trying to do, but it is too broadly / loosely written. It does not appear to expand the Brooks Act. Eric suggested that NGIS reach out to Senator Heller’s office to offer assistance in additionally refining the bill since the text is kind of open-ended.

Jennifer – Jennifer said that she primarily agrees with Eric that it needs refinement. She also agrees that we should reach out to Senator Heller’s office as a local organization.

Karin – Karin said that we need clarification of the phrase “professions like” as it is used in the text of the bill. She would also like to know where NSGIC is seeing licensure requirements for as they are not apparent in the bill as written.

Andrea – Andrea would like to pass the text of the bill along to others in her city for feedback. She believes that the tone of the text is concerning and leads to fears of snowballing.

Polly – Polly agrees with the need for clarification of licensure requirements. She thinks we should look for information on the creation of the bill. Who is driving it? Engineers, surveyors, GIS?

Jorge – Jorge noted that he saw a reference to licensure in the opinion letters, and we need clarification on that requirement.

Moni – Moni asked if we need to create a subcommittee to craft a letter to Senator Heller's office? Do we know what the timeframe of this bill is? It was introduced on May 25th and there have been no amendment or other information. She also noted that the updated text mentioned by NSGIC is not on the webpage yet.

Gary – Gary asked if this is more of an issue based on the current climate in Washington, DC, with agencies being cut? He did find a source online that repeated that this bill is a revision of a 2014 bill which never made it out of the Senate floor. The source also noted that this bill has a 1% chance of passing based on a third party review of the text. Gary also noted that it may apply more to survey-grade work. He agrees with Eric that we should reach out to Senator Heller's office, and he will start a draft of a letter.

Open Discussion

Eric agrees with the questions regarding licensure, and he did review the other legislation mentioned in this bill. He noted that if GIS licensure is required then one would have to be offered. Karin noted that licensure isn't necessarily a bad thing since it would codify the profession and the skill set. The authors of the bill may not be aware that engineers don't do GIS; GIS is a separate profession. Eric said that if this is a way for architects, engineers, and surveyors to protect their jobs based on a misunderstanding of what GIS is then we need to get ahead of it. Jennifer suggested that we reach out to one of the bill's authors, or the SGO for clarification as well. Eric noted that the purpose of the Brooks Act was to award contracts based on qualifications, not pricing. Jennifer said that the Brooks Act sets out licensure requirements.

Gary said that he will begin drafting a letter to Senator Heller's office so that we can get it to him early next week. He will also continue to monitor the online discussion.

Meeting adjourned at 3:45.