A bill to be entitled
An act relating to engineering; amending s. 471.008, F.S.; authorizing the Board of Professional Engineers to establish standards of practice and responsibility rules for the profession of engineering; amending s. 471.013, F.S.; revising the prerequisites for a person to take an examination that determines whether she or he is qualified to practice in this state as an engineer; deleting an obsolete provision; amending s. 471.015, F.S.; revising licensure certification requirements to include active engineering experience and a minimum age; revising requirements for licensure by endorsement by the board; providing that the time period in which a licensure application must be granted or denied is tolled if an applicant is required to make a personal appearance before the board; requiring the board to deny a license if such an applicant fails to appear before the board within a specified timeframe; requiring the board to establish certain training and education requirements for certain qualified representatives; amending s. 471.025, F.S.; requiring a successor engineer to be able to independently recreate certain work when seeking to reuse certain documents; specifying that a successor engineer assumes full professional and legal...
responsibility by signing or affixing his or her seal to assumed documents; releasing the engineer who previously sealed the documents from any professional responsibility or civil liability for her or his work that is assumed by a successor engineer; defining the term "successor engineer"; amending s. 553.79, F.S.; requiring that structural inspections on a threshold building be performed during new construction or during certain repair or restoration projects; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 471.008, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

471.008 Rulemaking authority.—The board has authority to adopt rules pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 to:

(1) Implement provisions of this chapter or chapter 455 which confer duties upon it.

(2) Establish minimum standards of practice for the profession of engineering.

(3) Establish responsibility rules for the profession of engineering.

Section 2. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section 471.013, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
471.013 Examinations; prerequisites.—
(1)(a) A person shall be entitled to take an examination for the purpose of determining whether she or he is qualified to practice in this state as an engineer if the person is of good moral character and:

1. Is a graduate from an approved engineering science curriculum of 4 years or more in a school, college, or university which has been approved by the board; or and has a record of 4 years of active engineering experience of a character indicating competence to be in responsible charge of engineering;

2. Is a graduate of an approved engineering technology curriculum of 4 years or more in a school, college, or university within the State University System, having been enrolled or having graduated prior to July 1, 1979, and has a record of 4 years of active engineering experience of a character indicating competence to be in responsible charge of engineering; or

3. Has, in lieu of such education and experience requirements, 10 years or more of active engineering work of a character indicating that the applicant is competent to be placed in responsible charge of engineering. However, this subparagraph does not apply unless such person notifies the department before July 1, 1984, that she or he was engaged in such work on July 1, 1981.
The board shall adopt rules providing for the review and approval of schools or colleges and the courses of study in engineering in such schools and colleges. The rules must be based on the educational requirements for engineering as defined in s. 471.005. The board may adopt rules providing for the acceptance of the approval and accreditation of schools and courses of study by a nationally accepted accreditation organization.

Section 3. Subsections (2), (3), (6), and (7) of section 471.015, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

471.015  Licensure.—

(2)(a) The board shall certify for licensure any applicant who has submitted proof satisfactory to the board that he or she is at least 18 years of age and who:

1. Satisfies the requirements of s. 471.013(1)(a)1. and has a record of 4 years of active engineering experience of a character indicating competence to be in responsible charge of engineering; or

2. Satisfies the requirements of s. 471.013(1)(a)2. and has a record of 6 years of active engineering experience of a character indicating competence to be in responsible charge of engineering s. 471.013.

(b) The board may refuse to certify any applicant who has violated any of the provisions of s. 471.031.
(3) The board shall certify as qualified for a license by endorsement an applicant who:

(a) Qualifies to take the fundamentals examination and the principles and practice examination as set forth in s. 471.013, has passed a United States national, regional, state, or territorial licensing examination that is substantially equivalent to the fundamentals examination and principles and practice examination required by s. 471.013, and has satisfied the experience requirements set forth in paragraph (2)(a) and s. 471.013; or

(b) Holds a valid license to practice engineering issued by another state or territory of the United States, if the criteria for issuance of the license were substantially the same as the licensure criteria that existed in this state at the time the license was issued.

(6) The board may require a personal appearance by any applicant for licensure under this chapter. Any applicant of whom a personal appearance is required must be given adequate notice of the time and place of the appearance and provided with a statement of the purpose of and reasons requiring the appearance. If an applicant is required to appear, the time period within which a licensure application must be granted or denied is tolled until such time as the applicant appears. However, if the applicant fails to appear before the board at either of the next two regularly scheduled board meetings, the
(7) The board shall, by rule, establish qualifications for certification of licensees as special inspectors of threshold buildings, as defined in ss. 553.71 and 553.79, and shall compile a list of persons who are certified. A special inspector is not required to meet standards for certification other than those established by the board, and the fee owner of a threshold building may not be prohibited from selecting any person certified by the board to be a special inspector. The board shall develop minimum qualifications for the qualified representative of the special inspector who is authorized to perform inspections of threshold buildings on behalf of the special inspector under s. 553.79 and shall establish by rule ongoing training or education requirements for qualified representatives to maintain their certification or qualification.

Section 4. Subsection (4) is added to section 471.025, Florida Statutes, to read:

471.025 Seals.—

(4) A successor engineer seeking to reuse documents previously sealed by another engineer must be able to independently recreate all of the work done by the original engineer. A successor engineer assumes full professional and legal responsibility by signing and affixing his or her seal to the assumed documents. Such documents must be treated as though
they were the successor engineer's original product, and the
original engineer is released from any professional
responsibility or civil liability for prior work assumed by the
successor engineer. For the purposes of this subsection, the
term "successor engineer" means an engineer who is using or
relying upon the work, findings, or recommendations of the
engineer who previously sealed the pertinent documents.

Section 5. Paragraph (a) of subsection (5) of section
553.79, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

553.79 Permits; applications; issuance; inspections.—
(5)(a) During new construction or during repair or
restoration projects in which the structural system or
structural loading of a building is being modified, the
enforcing agency shall require a special inspector to perform
structural inspections on the a threshold building pursuant to a
structural inspection plan prepared by the engineer or architect
of record. The structural inspection plan must be submitted to
and approved by the enforcing agency before the issuance of a
building permit for the construction of a threshold building.
The purpose of the structural inspection plan is to provide
specific inspection procedures and schedules so that the
building can be adequately inspected for compliance with the
permitted documents. The special inspector may not serve as a
surrogate in carrying out the responsibilities of the building
official, the architect, or the engineer of record. The
contractor's contractual or statutory obligations are not relieved by any action of the special inspector. The special inspector shall determine that a professional engineer who specializes in shoring design has inspected the shoring and reshoring for conformance with the shoring and reshoring plans submitted to the enforcing agency. A fee simple title owner of a building, which does not meet the minimum size, height, occupancy, occupancy classification, or number-of-stories criteria which would result in classification as a threshold building under s. 553.71(12), may designate such building as a threshold building, subject to more than the minimum number of inspections required by the Florida Building Code.

Section 6. This act shall take effect October 1, 2019.