

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SSB 5984

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As Passed Senate, March 13, 2007

**Title:** An act relating to performing engineering services on significant structures.

**Brief Description:** Allowing only structural engineers to provide engineering services for significant structures.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research & Development (originally sponsored by Senators Murray and Clements).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Labor, Commerce, Research & Development: 2/27/07 [DPS, w/oRec].  
Passed Senate: 3/13/07, 36-11.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, COMMERCE, RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5984 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Kohl-Welles, Chair; Keiser, Vice Chair; Clements, Ranking Minority Member; Franklin, Murray and Prentice.

**Minority Report:** That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Holmquist.

**Staff:** Kathleen Buchli (786-7488)

**Background:** A professional engineer is a person who, through professional education and practical experience, possesses special knowledge of the mathematical and physical sciences and the principles and methods of engineering analysis and design. A professional engineer must register with the Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors (Board) by meeting work experience or education requirements established in statute and by the Board.

Structural engineering is a specialized branch of professional engineering. To receive a certificate of registration in structural engineering, an applicant must meet registration requirements of professional engineers, have two years of structural engineering experience, and pass an examination prescribed by the Board.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** An engineer must be registered as a structural engineer to provide structural engineering services for significant structures.

Significant structures are defined as:

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- hazardous facilities that contain explosive substances that will endanger the public if released;
- essential facilities such as hospitals, fire and police stations, structures that hold water or fire suppression materials, emergency vehicle shelters and garages, standby power-generating equipment, government communications centers, aviation control towers, and buildings having critical national defense functions;
- structures exceeding 100 feet in height;
- buildings of five stories or more;
- bridges with a span of more than 200 feet;
- piers with a surface area of more than 10,000 square feet; and
- buildings where more than 300 people congregate in one area.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect on July 1, 2008.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: This is a public safety issue. We should dedicate important public buildings to the specialty discipline of structural engineering. It requires more training and testing to become a structural engineer. This would provide for a uniform treatment throughout the state for important public structures; currently, some cities have stricter standards than others, this would provide for uniformity

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Murray, prime sponsor; James Curry, Architects and Engineers Legislative Council.