



Albany watch: New York State's 2014 Legislative Session

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As the 2014 Legislative Session approaches, ACEC New York has outlined its agenda, which promotes infrastructure funding and a better business climate throughout New York State.

ACEC New York's Agenda

Across the state, there will be competition and pressure as every single dollar is quickly accounted for and budgets fall short. With singleness of purpose, ACEC New York—which represents private sector engineering firms—will continue to push forth its agenda, one that includes rebuilding after Sandy and investing in infrastructure for our future and for the next generation of New Yorkers.

Sensible Infrastructure Funding: Exempt capital funding from the local property tax cap; provide legislative mandate relief for municipalities; invest in capital projects in addition to maintenance of existing infrastructure; all pension funds the flexibility to support infrastructure projects.

State Budget and Agency Funding: Provide agency funding that meets New York State's aging infrastructure needs.

Public-Private Partnerships (P3s): Expand opportunities for development by using P3s to provide funding for infrastructure and related projects.

Reauthorization of Design-Build: Design build offers flexibility in project delivery; decreases project delivery schedules and saves taxpayer money. Fair and equitable stipends should also be offered to losing short-listed teams.

Indemnification: Engineering firms should only be responsible for the work they perform. Contract language should be consistent with the standard of care as set up by the State Education Department.

Use of New York Private Design Firms: Expertise and efficiencies brought by private engineering firms provide greater savings for the taxpayer.

Qualifications Based Selection (QBS): Fosters the development of innovative and cost-effective designs by extending QBS requirements to public authorities and public benefit corporations. This also provides lower project life cycle costs.

Emergency Response Protections: Enact common sense legislation that would protect design professional firms from frivolous lawsuits in the wake of disasters. Firms should not be held responsible for problems that arise outside of their scope of practice

Increasingly, states are turning to solving their critical transportation needs within their own borders and without federal support. New York State needs to do the same. ACEC New York's common sense agenda will allow for appropriate investment in infrastructure while saving taxpayers money by using more efficient and cost-saving delivery methods and funding mechanisms. We believe that through the examination and testing of creative methods, the city, state and federal government can collaborate to find ways to increase funding, support growth, maintain the region's economic competitiveness and improve the quality of life for everyone in New York State.

ACEC New York is a proactive coalition of more than 270 firms representing every discipline of engineering related to the built environment. We are a diverse group of consulting engineering firms from across New York State, ranging from sole proprietors to multinational corporations that collectively employ over 20,000 New Yorkers and nearly ten times that number worldwide. Our shared goals are to further the business interests of our membership, enhance the quality and safety of the environment we live and work in, and help ensure the vitality of our communities. More information on ACEC New York legislative positions can be found on the ACEC New York website at www.acecny.org.

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