



Call for Action

Elimination of the California Board for Geologists and Geophysicists

Dear Southern California Section Member:

As you are aware from recent communications from me and other interested parties, the BGG has been eliminated effective October 23, 2009, and its responsibilities transferred to the engineer's board, BPELS. This action was taken by legislators under pressure to reach a budget compromise. Unfortunately, the action had no impact whatsoever on the budget, and the BGG was abolished suddenly and without due process, eliminating any open, fair and transparent review of the potential consequences. Existing law that carefully and deliberately outlines the specific measures and the timetable necessary for the elimination of boards and commissions was ignored entirely.

Many of you have responded with concern wondering if anything can be done, and with offers of time and financial assistance. The good news is that there is something that can be done, which I've alluded to in earlier emails - we can seek an injunction against implementation of AB20 4X and we can send a message to legislators that their ill-considered actions will have negative impacts on public health, safety, and the environment. We can remind Governor Schwarzenegger of his commitment to public safety and the environment. The pursuit of an injunction is not intended to attack or demean BPELS, it is to ensure that informed voices are heard in the formation of a Board responsible for public safety – YOUR VOICE!

To get started, the Southern California Section along with the Sacramento and San Francisco Sections are forming the California Association of Professional Geologists, which will file the injunction. We hope that other organizations representing geoscientists, including AEG's national organization, will join in down the road. We intend to support this effort with distributions from the newly-formed AEGSC-Political Action Fund and similar funds set up by the Northern California Sections. The funds will be started with donations from each section's operating account. The Sections, however, cannot fund this effort alone. We need your help! The estimated cost for this is \$15,000 to get through filing the initial complaint and up to \$100,000 to see it through to the end. Noting the early estimate of \$15,000, one geologist pledged \$100 and challenged 149 other geoscientists to match his gift. A great way to put it! We, of course, will gratefully accept all contributions, of greater or lesser amounts, based on your ability to give. Contributions may be sent to:

AEGSC-Political Action Fund
1772-J E. Avenida De Los Arboles, PMB #304
Thousand Oaks, CA 91362

The other side to this effort is an approach to legislators. We will be asking you to write letters at the appropriate time and with the appropriate message. We are in the process of consulting with legislators to elicit their advice and support in reinstating the BGG or repurposing BPELS into an agency that is fully equipped to fulfill its mission. With your help we can reach this important goal!

Sincerely,

Peter Thams, Chair
AEG Southern California Section