



CCGO Alert

June 15, 2005

This is a preliminary alert with more information to follow in the very near future. Monday, June 13, 2005, Tim Parker (GRA), CCGO President-Elect Charles Nestle (AEG SoCal), and Lobbyist Judy Wolen attended a meeting at the State Consumer Services Agency. The Schwarzenegger Administration has renewed its effort to eliminate and consolidate boards, as previously outlined in the California Performance Review, this time by picking on the 7 or 8 boards that are currently under sunset review. The Board for Geologists and Geophysicists is one such board.

The concerns that the Administration voiced about the BG&G included:

- 1) **Functionality** - Small Boards such as BG&G with only 7,000 members, are typically stretched thin with the limited resources they have, are burdened with the potential loss of institutional knowledge when unplanned and abrupt change in leadership occurs, and are challenged with even meeting staff vacation obligations. Additionally, the smaller boards typically do not have resources sufficient to adequately train new staff, and put in place and regularly update policies and procedures to allow the organization to function consistently and seamlessly over time.
- 2) **Focus** - some boards seem to focus more on the profession and professional issues than on consumer protection.
- 3) **Efficiency** - with such a small staff, the smaller boards cannot operate as efficiently as a larger combined board where different structural components such as answering the telephone and filing/routing information would be utilized and funded by a larger resource base.

The Administration's proposal is to merge the BG&G with the Board for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors (over 100,000 members). They say this is not to "eliminate" the BG&G but merge" the two Boards together, and to completely restructure the combined board. CCGO will be receiving a narrative description of what the merged-combined Geologists and Engineers Board would look like and will pass this along.

An alternative the Administration would be willing to consider is that the BG&G become a Bureau under the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA). This would address some of the Administration's concerns about functionality and efficiencies.

The Agency has said they intend to move this along quickly, and to wrap it up into legislation to be incorporated in this session (ends mid-September 2005). They have asked the CCGO to give them feedback on their proposal quickly, and they have said

they are not willing to consider a delay of one year to allow the geologist organizations to fully consider the pros and cons of the different proposals.

Over the next day or so, CCGO will be developing more information for member organizations to consider in order to evaluate the options and approach and to take on this latest effort by the Schwarzenegger Administration to reduce/consolidate/eliminate boards. Some of our options include:

- 1) Oppose and fully fight any effort to change the current BG&G, and push SB228 the current BG&G sunset review bill through this session.
- 2) Parallel track, push for a delay to make any decision regarding the Administration BG&G proposals.
- 3) Support or oppose moving to a Bureau under Department of Consumer Affairs.
- 4) Support or oppose merging the BG&G with BPELS.

Our initial (obvious) conclusion is to oppose any merging of the BG&G with BPELS or moving to the DCA. In addition, the issue of functionality may not be well supported as it seems the BGG is functioning very adequately. More soon from CCGO. This serves as a heads up that we will need a strong and decisive letter writing campaign to help address this latest Schwarzenegger Administration attack on the BG&G.

Following the meeting, Charles and Judy met with Bill Gage (Tim had to leave to attend another meeting). Bill said he thinks Senator Figueroa will meet with the Secretary of the Agency, Fred Aguiar and express her displeasure with the process the Administration is doing that is contrary to the Sunset Review Process. Bill thinks they will continue with the sunset bills as written which means we will have to do a strong support in the Assembly Business and Professions Committee on SB 228. The problem will be that the Governor will probably veto those bills and then the board sunsets and will end up a Bureau. A grassroots campaign is absolutely important along with editorials. What to write and to whom will follow as soon as we have that information. More information about Fred Aguiar and the State Consumer services Agency can be found at: [http://www.scsa.ca.gov/.](http://www.scsa.ca.gov/)