

Re-Elect Susan MacFarlane M.Sc., Ph.D., P.Eng. for PEO Western Region Councillor

I have a Ph.D. in Civil (Environmental) Engineering from the University of Toronto and a M.Sc. and B.Sc. (Eng) in Biological (Environmental) Engineering from the University of Guelph. For over 30 years, I have worked and solved problems in the areas of water, waste, stormwater, wastewater, spills and contaminated sites. My most recent position was General Manager of Lambton Area Water Supply System (LAWSS) which supplies water to about 100,000 people in Lambton County. At LAWSS, I managed capital projects and oversaw the operations and maintenance of the water treatment plant, booster stations and distribution system. Prior to my work at LAWSS, I was employed at a variety of environmental consulting companies doing work for both municipal and industrial clients.

I have been a member of PEO since 1992. My initial interest in joining PEO Council began when I became aware that PEO had a number of challenges to be addressed related to governance and regulatory performance which would have lasting impacts on the profession. My hope was that I could contribute positively and productively to resolving these issues and ensure that PEO remained a relevant and fair regulator moving forward.

As PEO's Western Region Councillor over the last four years (2021-present), I believe I have positively and actively contributed to the wide variety of new initiatives that have been introduced. This includes the introduction of mandatory compulsory profession development (CPD) for licence holders (PEAK). I am proud to say the program was designed to be flexible so that practicing licence holders can obtain training through a wide variety of methods with many low-cost or no-cost options. This is especially important for licence holders that want to remain practicing but do not have a full-time job to fund their training requirements.

The other change that had huge impacts on PEO operations is the introduction of the *Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act* (FARPACTA). This Act required PEO to simplify and streamline their existing licensing system in order to create an application system which is fair to all applicants and could be completed in 6 months. One key change will be that foreign trained engineers will no longer be required to have one year of Canadian experience prior to obtaining their license. I believe this change makes sense for our foreign trained engineers and have advocated that PEO effectively communicate this change so that companies that hire engineers are aware of it and can ensure that these new employees are

given the support they need in relation to design standards and other considerations that are unique to Canada.

As a member of the Regional Councillors Committee (RCC), which represents the five regions and 36 Chapters across Ontario I have been actively involved in championing the idea of implementing new policies, procedures and check lists for Chapter operations to assist in managing risk. As a former resident contractor in Sarnia's Chemical Valley, I have seen how the introduction of these controls can be used to manage risk very effectively.

As Chair of Council's Governance and Nominating Committee (GNC) for the past two years I have led some very important and key initiatives to move Council and the organization forward in the right direction. One key accomplishment was an updated yet relevant Code of Conduct which would give PEO Council the ability to remove Councillors under the most extreme situations or circumstances. This work also included basic yet important minimum requirements for a candidate to sit on PEO Council. Recently, GNC also introduced an updated Safe Disclosure (Whistleblower) Policy which will apply to both staff and volunteers. An initiative that GNC will be looking at moving forward is the potential to pay Councillors a modest stipend for each meeting with the hope that this will encourage more of our fellow licence holders to serve on Council and participate in our self-regulating process.

As many of you know, during the FARPACTA process the Engineering Intern (EIT) Program had to be discontinued to allow for a defined and accelerated licencing process. However, I am happy to announce that PEO Council has reconfirmed its commitment to a new, updated EIT program at its November 2024 Council meeting. I am 100% supportive of the return of this valuable program to allow qualified graduates to signal their desire to become a P.Eng. The EIT program is also important to protect the public interest by having these members understand the role and purpose of PEO as a regulator. I also believe the EIT program will be important to our internationally trained graduates who do not yet have their 4 years of experience. The EIT designation will communicate to potential employers that they are on track to get their P.Eng. after they have completed the required experience.

I believe I have helped PEO Council accomplish much over these past four years and look forward to assisting PEO in the many challenges that lie ahead for PEO as a self-regulating organization that is committed to continuous improvement and protecting the public interest.

Thank you for reading this and as a reminder, voting begins January 27, 2025 and ends February 24, 2025. If you require any further information, you can contact me at susan.macfarlane@sympatico.ca. Please vote and I encourage you to spread the word so we have a great voter turn-out for this PEO election!