



Walker Engineering, Ltd.

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March 1, 2021

To: RI House Labor

RE: 2021 – H 5717
Relating to Public Property and Works – Minority Business Enterprise
Written Testimony in Opposition

Walker Engineering, Ltd. is a certified WBE and DBE firm in the State of Rhode Island by the Office of Diversity, Equity and Opportunity, Minority Business Enterprise Compliance Office. Walker Engineering, Ltd. is authorized to practice engineering in the State. In addition, I am a licensed Professional Engineer in the State of Rhode Island.

I am in opposition to the consideration of the bill to eliminate WOMEN as a minority owned business. As noted in the definition (a) for Affirmative Action, I cannot comprehend how eliminating women is not discrimination.

It has been over 100 years since women gained the right to vote. This legislation appears to set women back many years.

In a professional field dominated predominantly by men and male-owned businesses, this designation enables my business and others like WEL, the opportunity to compete on a more-level playing field.

I long for the day that no designation should be needed for all qualified individuals and firms to compete on a level playing field, however, that day is not TODAY.

In addition, COVID has had a major negative impact on working women and women-owned businesses as are reported frequently on the news. As of the news this morning, these negative impacts were described as a SHE-CESSION, where so many women have been forced to leave the work force to care for their families.

PLEASE vote this bill down for any further consideration

Sincerely,
WALKER ENGINEERING, LTD.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patricia K. Walker". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Patricia K. Walker, PE
President