



# Department of Justice

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The Department of Justice filed a civil antitrust suit today charging the Mississippi State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors with eliminating price competition in the sale of engineering services in Mississippi.

Attorney General Benjamin R. Civiletti said the suit was filed in U.S. District Court in Jackson, Mississippi.

The Board is the sole professional engineering and land surveying licensing authority in the state. The Board issues certificates of registration to all properly certified or registered engineers in the state. There are approximately 5,800 professional engineers and land surveyors holding Board certificates to practice in Mississippi.

In 1971, the Board adopted a code of conduct to regulate the practice of professional engineering by certificate holders. In 1977, the Board amended the code by adding section 5(e), which prohibits the solicitation or submission of proposals for professional engineering services on the basis of competitive bidding.

Richard J. Favretto, Acting Assistant Attorney General of the Antitrust Division, said that the suit charged the Board with violation of Section 1 of the Sherman Act by restraining price competition among professional engineers.

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As a result of the code, the suit charged, price competition among professional engineers in Mississippi has been eliminated.

The suit asks that the court require the defendant to cancel the provisions of its code of conduct that prohibit competitive bidding and that the Board be permanently enjoined from adopting any new prohibition on competitive bidding.

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