

Konrad Jackson

From: Shilling, Adam J. <adam@designalaska.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 11, 2023 10:44 AM
To: Senate Labor and Commerce; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Kelly Merrick; Sen. Forrest Dunbar
Cc: Sen. Scott Kawasaki; dianneblumer@gmail.com
Subject: SB73 Testimony

Senate Labor and Commerce Committee members,

My name is Adam Shilling, I live in the City of Fairbanks within Senate District P.

I am a licensed Architect and I am opposed to SB73. My concern is twofold; first, the license for an interior designer does not represent a responsibility for life-safety comparable to an architect or an engineer. Second, the increase in red-tape and state expenses to regulate the industry is not a valuable use of state resources. To expand on the life-safety issue, I acknowledge there is a minor life-safety component to interior design. Selecting appropriate finishes for a healthy and comfortable environment is important, however a license comparable to an architect whose license qualifies them to design in a way that allows the public to occupy a building and exit that building in case of a fire is an overvaluation for an interior designer's responsibility with respect to that of an architect. One could replace 'architect' in the previous statement with 'engineer', the state of Alaska has determined the individual designing a public structure to remain erect during heavy snow or seismic events shall be a licensed structural engineer, and to elevate interior designers to that same threshold of responsibility is diminishing to other licensed design professionals in the state. To expand my second point, adding members to the AELS board and another full time employee is an increase in state spending, bureaucracy and red tape with the intent to protect the public from an amorphous risk that has yet to be made apparent. My opposition to SB73 is rooted in the lack of responsibility the professional holds for life-safety to the general public with respect to already licensed professions, as well as the disproportionate increase in state spending, bureaucracy and red tape.

Thank you for your consideration,

Adam Shilling, AIA

Architect | Design Alaska, Inc.

601 College Road | Fairbanks, AK 99701

907.452.1241 | Adam@designalaska.com

Konrad Jackson

From: designone@gci.net
Sent: Sunday, April 09, 2023 4:10 PM
To: Sen. Jesse Bjorkman
Subject: New Pom:SB 73 Register Interior Designers

Christine Hutchison
281 Juliussen Street

Kenai 99611,designone@gci.net
designone@gci.net
9072527442

SB 73 OPPOSED to registering/permitting Interior design personnel. There is no value in growing government; increasing government and expense at the cost to residents and tax payers. Urge DNP designone@gci.net

Konrad Jackson

From: David Bunts <David@sterlingcustomhomes.net>
Sent: Tuesday, April 11, 2023 1:30 PM
To: Sen. Jesse Bjorkman
Subject: SB 73

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Hi Senator Bjorkman,
I had a local business man contact me about SB73 and the addition of interior designers being added. I am traveling out of state right now with limited connectivity and time. Do you know anything about this and why it is being proposed? From what I am told, I think I would oppose it but need more information i guess.

Thank you for serving us and putting yourself out there,

David Bunts
Sterling Custom Homes
398-4781
Sent from iPad

Konrad Jackson

From: Elke Gustafson <elke.mazzeo@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 11, 2023 2:09 PM
To: Sen. Jesse Bjorkman
Subject: SB 73

Please forgive my typo in the previous email . This is a very emotional issue for me . It's my livelihood .
Please vote no

Elke Mazzeo
Coordinators Interior Design
1600 A st Suite 300
Anchorage , Ak 99501
907.563.2220

> On Apr 10, 2023, at 9:56 PM, Elke Gustafson <elke.mazzeo@gmail.com> wrote:

>

> Senator Bjorkman ,

>

> I write to you today to encourage you to not pass SB 71 and exclude our business , which has operated for 30+ years in this community , from receiving new work specifically in the commercial sector . This bill is unnecessary and pushed aggressively by a few who seek to secure even more of the work available to those in our trade . History has value , experience has value , those qualifications aren't represented within this bill . I have worked in this trade since 1996 and have wonderful relationships with the clients and companies I have been able to work with over the years , those relationships would be forced to end if this passed and not by choice of the client but by legislature .

>

> Please allow us to continue the good work we have done for decades .

>

> Your time and consideration are greatly appreciated, Elke Mazzeo

>

> Elke Mazzeo

> Coordinators Interior Design

> 1600 A st Suite 300

> Anchorage , Ak 99501

> 907.563.2220

Konrad Jackson

From: Morse, Ryan N. <ryanm@designalaska.com>
Sent: Monday, April 10, 2023 7:14 PM
To: Senate Labor and Commerce; Sen. Click Bishop
Cc: Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Forrest Dunbar; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Kelly Merrick
Subject: SB73 - Personal Letter of Opposition

Senator Bishop, Senate Labor & Commerce Members, and Senator Claman,

My name is Ryan Morse. I live and work in Fairbanks and am a licensed Architect. I have had the opportunity to represent my peers as the board president of AIA Alaska and currently sit on the AIA National Strategic council representing Alaska and the Marianas Islands. Over the past dozen years I have contributed to the Alaska's design and construction industry – working closely with engineers, fellow architects, specialty designers including interior designers, and contractors large and small.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my opposition to SB73 and have provided further information below to explain why I request that you do not move this bill from you committee in its current form.

The framing question that continues to come up among my peers in the industry is “Why do we need this legislation?” and the simple answer is that we don't. There has been no evidence presented that licensing of interior design professionals will alleviate a current problem, or prevent a foreseeable problem. Passing this bill would simply add unnecessary expenses and confusion. In other words, it offers a solution where no problem exists.

There are 20-25 people in Alaska who meet the requirements in the bill to become a licensed Interior Designer, yet this bill would add members to the AELS board and necessitate additional staff for the department. The costs will therefore be spread to all individuals currently licensed under AELS. Given that there is no public health, safety, or welfare problem currently, it is unnecessary to burden existing registrants with this costs and regulators with the burden when interior design licensing is not needed.

I want to dispel the idea that architects opposed to this legislation are participating in some sort of turf war or trying to prevent interior designers from providing the services they are qualified to offer to the public. The reality is that each design and engineering profession is uniquely trained on a certain set of skills and knowledge. Interior designers scope of work is already allowed to be performed, unregulated, without any safety concerns from the industry or public. When all the needed specialties work together they make up a team capable of creating a wide range of critical infrastructure to the community. Two areas that only licensed architects have been rigorously trained and tested through national licensing exams are the coordination of the other disciplines and analyzing the overall impact of a building to the health, safety, and welfare of the community. Like engineers we carry a portion of the responsibility to comply with building codes and assure that what is built does not pose a risk to the public. This does not mean that interior designers – much like acoustic experts, kitchen designers, and many other common members of the building design team – are not valuable. What it does mean is that they are parts of the team that do not require government oversight and licensing to safely contribute to the project.

Architects are allies at heart to interior designers and always prefer opportunities to work closely together both professionally and with elected officials when needed. Unfortunately, what benefits and motivates a minority of the design community you have undoubtedly heard from on this topic is that those who would qualify for a license under this legislation would be able to increase their perceived status and billing rates. This does not benefit the public or the state and also appears to be detrimental to the rest of the interior design industry in Alaska. Because this legislation will restrict over 300 businesses from providing services they are currently safely providing, there is a financial impact to every person, business, and government agency that every needs to build or renovate in Alaska.

This is not a debate about the quality of anyone's characters or the strength of their design work. This is simply a question of what is best for the Alaskan public. The current laws protect the public by setting strict standards for who can create construction documents. The existing laws are successful. They protect all of us by guaranteeing that construction documents are only published by the state's most qualified and prepared design experts. Any benefits that proponents of SB73 claim it will provide must be weighed against the proven track-record of safety and success that the current licensing structure has provided to the Alaskan community for decades.

Only two states – Louisiana and Nevada – currently regulate the practice of interior design, which is what SB73 is proposing. Florida recently became the latest state to repeal their statute regulating the practice of interior design because it was found to be unconstitutional to limit who can design a space when it does not impact life safety. Alabama, Texas, Connecticut and other jurisdictions have also rolled back legislation similar to SB73 in response to disputes in the courts. If legislation to recognize the qualifications of certain interior designers is believed to be necessary in Alaska, a more appropriate approach would be a 'Title Act' which more than half of the states in the country have adopted. This can provide registration, stamp, and acknowledgment of highly qualified and tested interior designers, without unnecessary complications of a process that is certain to attract law suits and increase the cost of construction in Alaska.

So when the time comes to make a decision on SB73, I ask that you consider this questions, "Why do we need this legislation?" I sincerely believe there has been no justifiable need for this bill presented, and I ask you not to support unnecessary costly and confusing legislation.

Thank you for your continued service to our State and thoughtful deliberation on this matter.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any follow-up questions.

Kindest Regards,

Ryan N Morse, AIA, NCARB
Architecture | Design Alaska, Inc.

601 College Road | Fairbanks, AK 99701
907.452.1241 | RyanM@designalaska.com

April 11, 2023

TO: Senate Labor and Commerce Committee

email: Senate.Labor.And.Commerce@akleg.gov
Senator.Jesse.Bjorkman@akleg.gov
Senator.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov
Senator.Elvi.Gray-Jackson@akleg.gov
Senator.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov
Senator.Forrest.Dunbar@akleg.gov

Re: **Opposition to SB 73** An act to register Interior Designers and Interior Design

Dear Senators,

As a resident of Alaska, an AIA Alaska Member and a Registered Architect in the State of Alaska for the past 6 years, I am writing **OPPOSITION** of Senate Bill 73.

My concern with writing this legislation into law is that I do not see a need for interior design to be added into the State's list of regulations. The current registrations and statutes that are required by the SOA cover the health, life-safety, and welfare (HSW) aspects of the design, development and construction of buildings and the renovations of spaces within buildings at affect HSW.

I am also concerned with the level of regulation that this may cause, making it difficult for building owners and occupants to make small interior changes to their facilities. The hurdles that are required for many changes and major renovations are already difficult, time consuming and costly to building owners and occupants. Adding more complexity with the requirement of a registered interior designer may be prohibitive to smaller interior only projects.

The definition outlined in section 32. AS 08.48.341 for 'interior design' is almost duplicative of the definition of 'practice of architecture' with the addition of 'interior' into the documentation. This again emphasizes to me that the state already has this covered in the legislation for the State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land Surveyors. Interior Design is a part of Architectural design. While they may be separated out in some instances, part of being an Architect is also doing interior design.

I do however see a need to identify, acknowledge, and separate the professionals who are registered Interior Designers with other design professions that do not go through the rigorous requirements that NCIDQ registered Interior Designers have to go through. This is a valid profession, and the importance of it is valued. Adding this registration to the list of registrations for the SOA is not the best way to do this. The federal government provides RFPs that request the design team have a NCIDQ individual on the team. I think this is a great way of separating the registered interior professionals from unregistered interior designers.

Based on the above comments I urge you to OPPOSE Senate Bill 73.

Sincerely,



Michelle Klouda, AIA NCARB