

From: [Jason Gamache](#)
To: [House Labor and Commerce](#); [Rep. Matt Claman](#); [Rep. Sara Rasmussen](#); [Sen. Mia Costello](#)
Cc: bcash@best-yet.net
Subject: Please Support HB 61 Professional Registration for Commercial Interior Designers
Date: Thursday, March 11, 2021 4:24:16 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

Dear Committee Members, esteemed Representatives and Senator,

As a Principal Architect, member of AIA, NCARB and owner of an Alaskan design firm, I am writing to present my unconditional support and encourage you to please Support HB 61 Professional Registration for Commercial Interior Designers. I would be pleased to testify in favor of HB 61.

You may be already aware that many states across the US require licensure (based on national credentials) for Interior Designer's just like Architect's, Landscape Architect's and Engineer's. I happen to be licensed in 15 of them and have employee Interior Designers licensed in other states as well. We are not in uncharted water here, nor are we trying to reinvent the wheel or discover fire. Registration for Interior Designers is rightfully practiced in other states and our state of Alaska lack of distinguishing credentials for qualified Interior Designer's is outdated and needs to be corrected. We all want ownership of our work... and they should have that right as professionals who currently can't do that in Alaska.

These professionals go through rigorous schooling, training, testing and continuous education to ensure that they are practicing with current knowledge that effects life safety and complies with building codes. Often their work is integrated into a larger package of Construction and Permit documents, which in Alaska has an Architect like myself stamp and sign their work (in which case I am assuming the legal liability of their work under my supervision). Qualified Interior Designers are however capable of stamping their own work **if** they were licensed and would be held responsible / liable as the Designer of Record (DOR). Other times they perform work, which may not include or require an Architect however should still be completed by someone with distinguishable credentials.

Meanwhile, there are also people practicing interior design without any qualifications and as a consumer, there is currently no way to distinguish between the two (qualified or not qualified) in the State of Alaska. If I did not have an Architect's license, I would not be able to advertise myself or my business as an Architect or Architectural Services; that would be illegal. I could be fined or go to jail. However, in Alaska, anyone can claim to be an Interior Designer and or provide Interior Design Services. Just to bluntly clarify, Interior Design is not limited to selecting colors of paint, rugs or furniture... that would be an 'Interior Decorator.' This is not unlike the distinction between 'Architects' and 'Designers' or 'Landscape Architects' and 'Landscapers.'

Two years ago (this week), my partners and I wanted to promote a well-deserved and qualified employee to Principal. This person was our Director of Interior Design and we wanted to offer them a part of our ownership. Unfortunately due to state laws, which limited our professional practice to only include owners with a professional licensure in the state of Alaska; she could not become an

owner. Standing uncomfortable in the light of our partnership which represented “a good ‘ole boys club of yesteryear,” that in-fact we are not, nor did we wish to continue business in that condition, we made a big change so we could include a new partner... Although painful, yet worth it, we re-incorporated and re-structured our company under a different type of business license in order to allow for a partner without a professional license. Nearly a year later, after lots of legal paperwork and unnecessary expenses, we were finally able to make her a partner in our business. We are better for it! I consider this condition an outdated relic in our State’s legal system that limits diversity and economic growth.

Lets make another big change... Pass HB 61 without delay. Allow Alaskan companies like mine to more easily include Interior Designer’s in our ownership and give them something that distinguishes their credentials from imposters. This is good for public safety and good for business, allowing companies like mine to be recognized for qualified professional services and give Interior Designers dignification for owning their work.

Sincerely,

Jason A Gamache, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP, MCG Explore Design

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Jason Gamache, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP

Principal Architect

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[REDACTED]

From: Evelyn Rousso [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 12, 2021 2:55 PM
To: Rep. Matt Claman
Subject: HB 61

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Please Support HB 61 Establishing Professional Registration for Commercial Interior Designers

I am reaching out in consideration of HB 61, Registration for Commercial Interior Designers, in the interest of allowing interior designers meeting rigorous national qualifications standards and credentials to independently practice a limited, defined scope within public-occupancy buildings.

- My support is based on my personal experience working with qualified commercial interior designers. I have found them to be educated, experienced, credentialed experts in their field, able to protect public safety within their defined scope of practice as identified in HB 61 (page 14, Sec.32. AS 08.48.341 (24)-(27)).
- HB 61 does not displace architects or in any way impair their ability to provide the full scope of their profession, however, it will provide commercial interior designers the ability to stamp-sign-seal their own documents and take responsibility for their own work.
- Recognizing AIA's 20+ year old national policy opposing registration for interior design, there may be benefit for reconsideration from a previous insular perspective to a broader, mutually beneficial perspective relevant to these more inclusive times.
- Currently there is no requirement that persons providing commercial interior design services in public buildings be credentialed to protect public safety. HB 61 registration qualifications include nationally accredited interior design degrees, required hands-on training, passing a 3-part national examination in full and becoming registered in Alaska to practice.
- HB 61 is voluntary. Architects are exempt from it; non-registered interior designers may work under a registered commercial interior designer or architect in the commercial field or provide interior design for residential single-family to 4-plex structures.

Please vote in favor of HB 61, it will protect the public, increase professional job opportunities, attract high-quality design talent to Alaska, expand consumer choice of qualified design professionals, and encourage small business.

Sincerely,



Evelyn Rousso, AIA
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 13, 2021 1:12 PM
To: Joey Bosworth
Subject: FW: Please Support HB 61 Professional Registration for Commercial Interior Designers

From: Jason Gamache <jgamache@ExploreDesign.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 11, 2021 4:24 PM
To: House Labor and Commerce <House.Labor.And.Commerce@akleg.gov>; Rep. Matt Claman <Rep.Matt.Claman@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sara Rasmussen <Rep.Sara.Rasmussen@akleg.gov>; Sen. Mia Costello <Sen.Mia.Costello@akleg.gov>
Cc: bcash@best-yet.net
Subject: Please Support HB 61 Professional Registration for Commercial Interior Designers

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partnership which represented “a good ‘ole boys club of yesteryear,” that in-fact we are not, nor did we wish to continue business in that condition, we made a big change so we could include a new partner... Although painful, yet worth it, we re-incorporated and re-structured our company under a different type of business license in order to allow for a partner without a professional license. Nearly a year later, after lots of legal paperwork and unnecessary expenses, we were finally able to make her a partner in our business. We are better for it! I consider this condition an outdated relic in our State’s legal system that limits diversity and economic growth.

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Sincerely,

Jason A Gamache, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP, MCG Explore Design



Jason Gamache, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP

Principal Architect



www.exploredesign.com



[REDACTED]

From: Kevin Kee [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 15, 2021 1:39 PM
To: Rep. Matt Claman
Subject: HB 61 Registration for Commercial Interior Designer

Good Afternoon,

I'm writing you to voice my support of HB 61, Registration for Commercial Interior Designers.

I support HB 61 establishing professional registration to protect public life-safety through regulating interior design within public buildings. It will bring many benefits to Alaskans.

- **HB 61**

- Will ensure interior designers of public buildings are qualified to protect the public, having met national certification standards of education, experience, examination, and become registered to practice in Alaska
- Is compatible with all Alaska design professions; architects are exempt; non-registered interior designers may work under a registered designer or architect, or provide interior design for single-family to 4-plex

- **HB 61**

- Defines a scope of practice involving public life-safety components:
 - Design of interior non-bearing wall & ceiling configurations; occupant load analysis, number and location of suite exit points, path of travel distance & width, accessibility within spaces and to exits
 - Design/specification of interior materials, furnishings & fixtures addressing combustibility, flame spread, smoke propagation & density, slip resistance, bracing, clearances, infection control
 - Development of interior non-bearing construction documents to meet applicable codes, regulations and guidelines, and coordination of fire detection/suppression device locations

- **HB 61**

- Will be self-funded through the AELS Registration Board under the same registration & renewal fee structure as architects, engineers, land surveyors, and landscape architects

- Provides a professional stamp for non-bearing interior construction document permitting (currently in effect in 10 states, plus Washington DC and Puerto Rico)

HB 61 will bring **economic benefits** to Alaskans by increasing professional employment and salary opportunities, expanding consumer choice of qualified design professionals, encouraging small business and unrestrained trade, hiring Alaskans for professional interior design rather than “outside experts”; narrowing the professional workforce gap by attracting high-quality design talent to the state, enabling Alaskans earning interior design degrees “outside” to return home for professional career opportunities, thus retaining Alaska resident talent.

Please vote in favor of HB 61 for its public safety impact, consumer choice expansion, economic benefits and positive effect on small business in Alaska. Help Alaska join 27 other states that regulate interior design!

Sincerely,

Kevin A. Kee

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [Karen Zaccaro](#)
To: [Rep. Zack Fields](#); [Rep. Ivy Spohnholz](#); [Rep. Calvin Schrage](#); [Rep. Liz Snyder](#); [Rep. David Nelson](#); [Rep. James Kaufman](#); [Rep. Ken McCarty](#)
Subject: Support for HB0061
Date: Monday, March 15, 2021 6:51:29 AM

I am an Architect licenced in the state of Alaska with 20 years experience here in Alaska. I strongly support the creation of the commercial interior design registration and the regulation of commercial interior design.

These projects are often left without a certified professional to guide them. This can lead to inefficiencies and poor design, but more importantly life safety code issues and lack of ADA compliance. Certified commercial interior designers would better protect business owners and the public from people calling themselves designers that have not met rigorous education or professional standards.

Yes, an Architect could perform these services also- but we don't typically.

Professional interior designers have been doing this more efficiently and cost effectively for clients for decades.

It is in the public good to certify these professionals and ensure businesses and the general public are provided safe, compliant interior design.

I am happy to answer any questions you might have on this topic.

With sincere thanks for your service,

Karen Zaccaro, AIA