

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Support HB 61 Registration for Commercial Interior Designers
Date: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 3:36:37 PM

From: Natasha Schmidt [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 07, 2021 11:56 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Support HB 61 Registration for Commercial Interior Designers

Dear Representative Claman,

I would like to personally thank you for sponsoring HB 61 and spending the time with the ASID Alaska Chapter GAC Committee to bring this bill forward. It's important for the State of Alaska and our industry and I appreciate you recognizing that and being our ally. Below is the letter I sent to all members of the House Labor & Commerce Committee.

Please Support HB 61 Professional Registration for Commercial Interior Designers

My name is Natasha Schmidt, I am a life-long Alaskan and small business owner of the largest commercial interiors and strategic planning firm in Alaska, SALT LLC. I am a professional member of American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) a title held for those who have passed the international qualifying NCIDQ exam, and I currently hold the position of President of the ASID Alaska Chapter. I have also earned a LEED Green Associates status which demonstrates additional knowledge specific to sustainable design practices. In my 20-year career as a commercial interior designer I have become an expert in corporate tenant improvement designs, planning well over five million square feet of office space in the State of Alaska.

[Commercial interior designers of public-occupancy buildings directly impact public health, safety and welfare in most aspects of their work.](#) As an expert in corporate design, I work with the client to design a space that meets their programmatic space needs while also managing a multi-discipline design team to develop documents for construction that meet all local, state and federal code requirements and guidelines to ensure health and safety minimums are met. I specify materials and finishes that comply to code and testing requirements so that in the event of disaster the building occupants can safely evacuate the building.

Through completing a rigorous undergraduate program, earning accredited university degrees, hands-on training, and passing an international 3-part exam, commercial interior designers are well qualified to undertake the following public safety design responsibilities:

1. Design of interior non-bearing wall & ceiling configurations: occupant load analysis, number and location of internal exits, path of travel distance & width, accessibility in suites & to exits
2. Design/specification of interior materials, furnishings & fixtures: infection mitigation &

control, combustibility, flame spread, smoke density, propagation, slip resistance coefficient

3. Development of interior non-bearing construction documents in compliance with applicable codes, regulations, guidelines; fire detection/suppression device location coordination

HB 61 Economic Benefits to Alaskans: As a small business owner of an Alaskan-Native owned, woman owned business who qualifies for Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) in the State of Alaska my company experiences firsthand the challenges our industry faces. I see through HB 61, opportunity for more design work to stay in Alaska with Alaskan firms and opportunities for more top design talent to return to Alaska to work and live after graduation:

1. Expands consumer choice of qualified design professionals; encourages small business
2. Increases professional employment and salary opportunities in Alaska, attracting high-quality design talent to the state and helping reduce the professional workforce gap
3. Encourages hiring Alaskans instead of “outside experts” for professional interior design, and those earning interior design degrees “outside” to return home for professional registration

HB 61 Registration for commercial interior designers will:

1. Be voluntary: non-registered interior designers may work in the residential field (single to 4-plex) or under a registered commercial interior designer or architect for commercial work
2. Be compatible with all design professions: architects will be exempt from this registration
3. Be considered self-funded through the existing AELS Registration Board fee structure
4. Provide a professional stamp for interior non-bearing construction document permitting giving registered commercial interior designers direct responsibility for their own work

Now, more than ever before, commercial interior design regulation is critical to public safety protection and effective COVID-19 response. Commercial interior Designers are at the forefront, developing new strategies to implement essential infection mitigation and control in public spaces: re-thinking public interior environments: developing new functional space standards, determining immediate & long-term solutions, analyzing touch-point surfaces and materials, and cleaning and maintenance protocols for durability and occupant safety.

Please support [HB 61 Registration for Commercial Interior Designers](#) to protect public safety, expand consumer choice of qualified design professionals, advance infection mitigation in public spaces, and bring economic benefits to Alaska. [Help Alaska join 27 other states that regulate interior design!](#)

Sincerely,
Natasha Schmidt, NCIDQ, ASID, LEED Green Associate
SALT



Informational video: [What Does an Interior Designer Actually Do?](#)

Natasha Schmidt, NCIDQ, ASID, LEED Green Associate

Principal | Director of Operations & Finance

SALT

645 G Street, Suite 301 | Anchorage AK 99501



www.salt-ak.com

As dutiful process followers, SALT is taking all precautions and complying with CDC guidelines, state and local mandates in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As we work from home, we are always available to you. Please don't hesitate to reach out, our office phones are being forwarded to maintain our connection with you. Should we need to meet with you, we are well equipped on several platforms to make that happen. The health and wellbeing of our entire community is paramount. Be well, stay home, stay safe and wash your hands.

Joey Bosworth

From: Lizzie Kubitz
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2021 4:33 PM
To: Joey Bosworth
Subject: FW: Support HB 61, Registration for Commercial Interior Designers

From: Jae Shin [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2021 3:28 PM
To: Rep. Matt Claman <Rep.Matt.Claman@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support HB 61, Registration for Commercial Interior Designers

Dear Representative Matt Claman,

Please Support HB 61, Registration for Commercial Interior Designers

I support HB 61, establishing professional registration and regulation of interior design within public occupancy buildings (commercial interior design).

HB 61 protects the public by ensuring interior designers are educated, trained, and tested via national certification standards to provide services in public buildings and registered in Alaska to provide:

1. Interior non-bearing wall and ceiling configurations; occupant loads, circulation, number and location of internal exits, path of travel distance & width, accessibility within suites and to exits
2. Interior finish materials/systems, furnishings, and fixtures: combustibility, flame spread, smoke density, smoke propagation, slip resistance, bracing, clearances, infection control
3. Interior non-bearing construction documents in compliance with applicable codes, regulations and guidelines, and coordinate location of fire detection/suppression devices

HB 61 creates economic benefits for Alaskans:

1. Expands consumer choice of qualified design professionals; encourages small business & unrestrained trade
2. Provides registered commercial interior designers a professional stamp for interior non-bearing construction document permitting, allowing them to take responsibility for their own work
3. Increases professional employment and salary opportunities in Alaska, attracting high-quality design talent to the state, helping reduce the professional workforce gap
4. Encourages Alaska residents earning interior design degrees “outside” to return home for professional licensure opportunity; retaining Alaska resident talent and reducing “brain-drain”
5. Encourages hiring Alaskans for professional interior design instead of “outside experts”
6. Is compatible with all Alaska design professions; architects are exempt and unaffected by this bill; non-registered interior designers may work under a registered commercial interior designer or architect, or provide residential interior design (single-family to 4-plex)

HB 61 will be self-funded under the AELS Registration Board within the same registration/renewal fee structure as architects, engineers, land surveyors and landscape architects. Seal and sign privileges will apply, allowing Registered Commercial Interior Designers to submit their non-structural interior construction drawings for permit, taking responsibility for their own work.

Please vote in favor of HB 61 supporting public safety, consumer choice, economic benefits, small and women-owned businesses in Alaska! [Help Alaska join 27 other states that regulate interior design!](#)

Respectfully,

Jae Shin, AIA, NCARB, NCIDQ
Principal/Architect/Interior Design

KPB ARCHITECTS




Alaska Professional Design Council

PO Box 244141
Anchorage AK 99524
(907) 334-9620
apdc@apdc-ak.org

MEMBER SOCIETIES

Alaska Society of Professional Engineers (ASPE)

Alaska Society of Professional Land Surveyors (ASPLS)

American Society of Civil Engineers, Alaska Section (ASCE)

American Society of Civil Engineers, Anchorage Branch (ASCE)

American Society of Landscape Architects, Alaska Chapter (ASLA)

American Council of Engineering Companies of Alaska (ACEC)

American Society of Interior Designers, Alaska Chapter (ASID)

Institute of Transportation Engineers, Alaska Section (ITE)

Structural Engineers, Alaska (SEAAK)

December 5, 2019

To: American Society of Interior Designers, Alaska Chapter

Regarding: Support of Alaska Interior Design Registration Initiative

Dear Sir or Madam,

This letter is to provide confirmation that APDC has reviewed the ASID initiative and supporting documents for Alaska Commercial Interior Design Registration as presented at our November 4, 2019 board meeting. APDC supports this Initiative in the interest of protecting the public health, safety and welfare of the people of Alaska.

We look forward to future progress of this initiative and support the title Registered Commercial Interior Designer for those qualified and registered with the State of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Mark Kimerer, PLA
APDC President

From: [Jason Swift](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: ECI in Support of HB 61
Date: Tuesday, April 6, 2021 10:03:38 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[2021-04-06 ECI Letter in Support of HB 61.pdf](#)

Dear Alaska State Representatives:

We are reaching out with a letter of support for HB 61, Registration for Commercial Interior Designers. Our firm, founded in Anchorage 1981, has had interior designers on staff since its inception and since 2007 have had an interior designer as one of three partners. Both Brian and I are AIA registered architects who strongly disagree with the small national and local groups who oppose HB61. We feel that with the complexity of today's built environment - educated, experienced, credentialed experts are needed in both of our fields, to protect public safety. This bill in no way reduces the architect's ability to practice within their broadly defined scope of practice, but provides consumers a choice to select a specialist in the commercial interior environment to provide professional services.

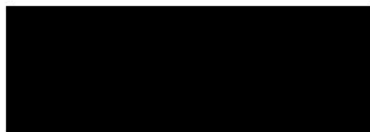
Please vote in favor of advancing HB 61 to protect the public health, safety and welfare, to recognize professional interior designers and to offer businesses a choice for their commercial design needs.

Thank you,

Jason Swift & Brian Meissner

ECI

Jason Swift AIA, LEED AP
Principal Architect



www.ecialaska.com

From: [Cara Rude](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Thank you for Supporting HB 61, Registration for Commercial Interior Designers
Date: Tuesday, April 6, 2021 1:19:34 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

Representative Claman,

My name is Cara Rude. I am a lifelong Alaskan, and owner of MCG Explore Design in Anchorage, Alaska. I hold a Bachelor of Science in Interior Design and passed my NCIDQ (National Council for Interior Design Qualifications) in 2011. I am registered in the State of Texas and have worked in the field for 18 years.

Two years ago, I became an owner of the longest established and among the largest architectural practices in Alaska. Lack of professional registration for commercial interior designers became an impediment and the company had to restructure from a Professional Corporation to an LLC. My partners and many other Architects in Alaska understand our qualifications and competencies as many of them work alongside us.

Interior design has often been mischaracterized as something other than the technical, complex, and human-centered practice of creating safe, sustainable, elevated, and efficient built environments in compliance with law and regulation that support the public health, safety, and welfare in public occupancy buildings.

This bill reflects the reality of the modern design marketplace. Accelerated construction timelines and constant technology advancements has led to the demand for Interior Designers that provide a focused education on environments to support human health, wellness, ethical material chemistry, commercial public life safety and the responsibility to reduce embodied carbon.

Alaska falls behind other states in this regard. Currently, interior design is regulated in 27 US states. During the coming 2021 session, legislation to allow this ability will be put forward in eight additional states.

I believe this voluntary registration for commercial Interior Designers will lead to better built environments and safeguard an elevated design marketplace for consumers.

Thank you for your sponsorship.

Upward,

Cara Rude, ASID, NCIDQ, LEED AP BD+C, WELL AP, NEWH

Principal, Interior Designer
[REDACTED]

Residence: [REDACTED]



www.exploredesign.com



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 [REDACTED] >
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: [REDACTED]
Subject: Please Support HB 61 Professional Registration for Commercial Interior Designers

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



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

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