



## Alaska Professional Design Council

PO Box 240753  
Anchorage AK 99524  
AlaskaAPDC@gmail.com

### MEMBER SOCIETIES

Alaska Society of  
Professional Engineers  
(ASPE)

Alaska Society of  
Professional Land  
Surveyors (ASPLS)

American Institute of  
Architects, Alaska  
Chapter (AIA)

American Society of  
Civil Engineers, Alaska  
Section (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)

April 16, 2021

The Honorable Zack Fields, Co-Chair  
House Labor & Commerce Committee  
Room 24  
Alaska State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801

### RE: HB61 - REGISTER COMMERCIAL INTERIOR DESIGNERS.

Dear Representative Fields,

The Alaska Professional Design Council (APDC) is a non-profit corporation representing over 5,000 Alaskan licensed professionals in the fields of engineering, architecture, landscape architecture, land surveying and interior design.


APDC supports HB61 and urges your committee to recommend passage of this bill. Support for HB61 is opposed by one of our members, the American Institute of Architects.

Commercial Interior Designers' work may involve building components and features that affect life safety issues, such as building space analysis, egress routing and fire ratings of walls, furnishings, and finishes. Registration of Commercial Interior Designers will improve public safety by providing assurance that the professionals doing this work have been qualified based on education, experience, and examination, like other design professionals. Registration also provides an enforcement mechanism in the unlikely event registrants fail to uphold public health, safety, and welfare.

Currently, construction documents affecting egress and fire ratings require a registered professional architect's seal and approval. Registering Commercial Interior Designers will enable those professionals, who are not necessarily architects, to prove their knowledge of the relevant safety regulations, practices, and guidelines and to seal and approve construction documents covering their scope of work. HB61 broadens the pool of professionals certified to do commercial interior design work and does not restrict registered professional architects from continuing to develop and sign interior design plans. HB61 does not apply to residential work in single family homes up to 4-plex structures.

HB61 also includes a provision to expand the State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land Surveyors by two seats, to ensure continuous representation by electrical and mechanical engineers. APDC unanimously supports this aspect of the bill.

Thank you.

  
Will Webb, PE, PTOE, President  
Alaska Professional Design Council

cc: House Labor & Commerce Committee members

**From:** [Pakak Boerner](#)  
**To:** [Megan Holland](#); [Joey Bosworth](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Pass HB 61  
**Date:** Friday, April 16, 2021 1:47:26 PM

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**From:** Larry S. Cash [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Friday, April 16, 2021 1:10 PM  
**To:** Rep. Ivy Spohnholz <Rep.Ivy.Spohnholz@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Pass HB 61

**House Labor and Commerce Committee: HB-61**

**Dear Madam Co-chair, Representative Spohnholz:**

I am writing to express my strong support for your passing HB-61. I have practiced in the profession of Architecture since I became registered in 1976. I moved to Alaska in 1977 and have practiced here since then. I founded my own firm, RIM Architects, in 1986. RIM is headquartered in Anchorage with additional locations in Guam, Hawaii, San Francisco and Tustin, CA.

During these 40 some years of practice, I have worked with professionally qualified, credentialed Interior Designers to complete literally hundreds of projects. **Commercial Interior Design is a specialized field of practice that is complimentary to my profession of Architecture.** It is my experience that qualified Interior Designers consistently enhance our projects from a function and Life Safety standpoint. Qualified Commercial Interior Designers have a focused level of expertise in interior finishes regarding fire, smoke, infection control, and toxicity characteristics that adds a level of life safety to the built environment that is deserving of Professional Registration. **The public at large and our clients have benefitted from the integrated safety characteristics of our projects brought about through the expertise of Commercial Interior Designers.**

I understand the American Institute of Architects, (AIA) State and National organizations are opposing HB-61, making it, for me, even more important to voice my emphatic support for HB-61, coming from my years of successful experience working with expert Commercial Interior Designers.

To be completely transparent, I must disclose that Barbara Cash, my wife of almost 42 years, is a Commercial Interior Designer. She founded her own Commercial Interior Design business in Anchorage and successful practiced for over 40 years.

**I urge you to pass HB-61 to assure life-safety in our public buildings.**

Best Regards,

**Larry S Cash, FAIA, NCARB**

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**RIM is taking all precautions and complying with CDC guidelines in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Employees are working from home and meetings are continuing electronically. Our main phone numbers are being answered remotely during regular business hours and calls forwarded as appropriate. We wish you safe and healthy days ahead.**



October 17, 2018

To : American Society of Interior Designers, Alaska Chapter  
Regarding : Alaska Interior Design Registration Initiative

Dear ASID Alaska,

This letter is to provide confirmation that the Alaska Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers, has reviewed the ASID Petition in support of Alaska Interior Design Registration as presented to our Board, October 13, 2018, and on behalf of our 800 Alaska members has agreed to support this Petition in the interest of Alaska's public health, safety and welfare.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tor Anderzen". The signature is fluid and stylized, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Tor Anderzen, P.E., M. ASCE  
ASCE Alaska Section President





## **Institute of Transportation Engineers - Alaska Section**

P.O. Box 242114, Anchorage, Alaska 99524

September 8, 2017

To : American Society of Interior Designers, Alaska Chapter  
Regarding : Support of Alaska Interior Design Registration Initiative

Dear ASID Alaska,

This letter is to provide confirmation that the Institute of Transportation Engineers, Alaska Chapter, has reviewed the ASID Petition in support of Alaska Interior Design Registration as presented to our membership, September 6, 2017. On behalf of our 115 Alaska members the Board has agreed to support this Petition in the interest of Alaska's public health, safety and welfare.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Sean Baski'.

Sean Baski, P.E.  
ITE Alaska Section President

March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019

To: American Society of Interior Designers, Alaska Chapter  
Regarding: Support of Alaska Interior Design Registration Initiative

Dear ASID Alaska,

This letter is to provide confirmation that the Alaska Society of Professional Land Surveyors has reviewed the ASID Petition in support of Alaska Interior Design Registration as presented and reviewed by our Board, June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018, and on behalf of our ASPLS members has agreed to support this Petition in the interest of protecting the public health, safety and welfare of the people of Alaska.

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

Sincerely,



3/7/19

Josh Varney, PLS

ASPLS Past President

October 26, 2019

To : American Society of Interior Designers, Alaska Chapter

Regarding : Support of Alaska Interior Design Registration Initiative

Dear ASID Alaska,

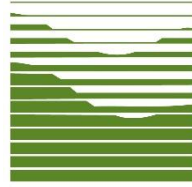
This letter is to provide confirmation that ASPE Alaska has reviewed the ASID initiative and supporting documents for Alaska Commercial Interior Design Registration as presented at our October 26, 2019 Meeting. On behalf of our 155 Alaska members, we support this Initiative in the interest of protecting 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,



Chris Miller, ASPE Alaska President  
PO Box 100222  
Anchorage, AK 99510



AMERICAN  
SOCIETY OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTS

Alaska Chapter  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
500 L Street, Suite 400  
Anchorage, AK 99501

October 05, 2017

Alaska Chapter  
American Society of Interior Designers  
P.O. Box 242324  
Anchorage, AK 99524

Dear ASID Alaska,

This letter is to provide confirmation that the American Society of Landscape Architects, Alaska Chapter, has reviewed the ASID Petition in support of Alaska Interior Design Registration as presented to our Executive Board, June 14, 2017. On behalf of our 47 Alaska members, the Alaska Chapter Executive board supports the Petition of identifying the Interior Design profession in the interest of protecting the health, safety and welfare of the People of Alaska.

We look forward to future progress of this initiative and the successful Registration for qualified Interior Designer in Alaska.

Sincerely,

Ed Leonetti, ASLA  
President, ASLA Alaska Chapter



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES  
*of Alaska*

November 6, 2019

American Society of Interior Designers, Alaska Chapter  
P.O. Box 242324  
Anchorage, AK 99524

RE: SUPPORT OF ALASKA INTERIOR DESIGN REGISTRATION  
INITIATIVE, AMERICAN SOCIETY OF INTERIOR DESIGNERS, ALASKA  
CHAPTER

Dear ASID Alaska,

This letter is to provide confirmation the ACEC Alaska Board has reviewed the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) initiative and supporting documents for Alaska Commercial Interior Design Registration as presented at our October 8, 2019 meeting. On behalf of our over 25 Alaska member firms, we support 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,

Kyle Brennan, P.E.  
President, ACEC of Alaska  
PO Box 200345  
Anchorage, AK 99520-0345





## Structural Engineers Association of Alaska

October 25, 2019

To : American Society of Interior Designers, Alaska Chapter  
Regarding : Support of Alaska Interior Design Registration Initiative

Dear ASID Alaska,

This letter is to provide confirmation that SEAAK has reviewed the ASID initiative and supporting documents for Alaska Commercial Interior Design Registration as presented at our September 18, 2019 Meeting. On behalf of our 62 Alaska members (as well as 9 corporate members), we support 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,

Jeremy Ryan, SEAAK President  
Associate Principal  
DCI Engineers, Inc.  
341 W Tudor Rd, Suite 105  
Anchorage, AK 99503

April 16, 2021

House Labor and Commerce Committee Members

RE: HB 61 Registration for Commercial Interior Designers

I am offering this letter to support HB 61, Registration for Commercial Interior Designers, in the interest of allowing interior designers who meet rigorous national qualifications standards and credentials to independently practice a limited, defined scope within public-occupancy buildings.

You have received a letter from my partners Brian Meissner and Jason Swift. I joined ECI in 1995 as the director of design with the credentials that HB-61 requires to be considered a commercial interior designer. In 2007 I became a partner.

Although we are a multi-disciplinary firm in addition to shared projects, we also have always had tenant improvement projects that were considered to be in the interior design realm. One of the comments we heard this week from someone who is not supporting this legislation was the if interior designers are licensed then all projects would require an interior designer, and the example was given that "for example the state would have to hire a commercial interior designer to relocate cubicals".

They likely did not know that the professional commercial interior designers of our firm have provided space planning and tenant improvements services under a state contract for 23 years – starting in 1998 with the acquisition of the Atwood Building and more recently with the renovations for the new legislative office building. We have completed state projects in Anchorage, Bethel, Fairbanks, Juneau, Kodiak, Kotzebue, Nome, Palmer and Wasilla. Anchorage is the only location on this list in which we currently are able to practice without an architectural stamp to complete these projects.

With the complexity of today's built-environment, educated, experienced, credentialed experts are needed in each of our fields, to protect public health and safety within each defined scope of practice. This bill in no way reduces the ability of any other profession within AELS to practice within their defined scopes of practice but provides consumers a choice to select a specialist in the commercial interior environment to provide professional services, and to take their project from design through permitting and construction within their more limited scope of practice.

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.

Sincerely,

Mary G Knopf, NCIDQ, FASID, IIDA, LEED AP  
Principal, ECI

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

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**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

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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

[REDACTED]  
[www.salt-ak.com](http://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

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

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**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](#)

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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](http://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](#)

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## **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](http://www.exploredesign.com)



[REDACTED]

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**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]

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**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

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**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](http://www.exploredesign.com)



[REDACTED]

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**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]



House Labor and Commerce Committee  
Representative Spohnholz, Co-Chair

Dear Representative Spohnholz,

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 of work within public-occupancy buildings.

- My support is based on my current status as an interior design student and previous experience as an interior design assistant for professional commercial interior designers in the State of Alaska. I am a lifelong Alaskan pursuing my interior design degree at a Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) accredited university in Colorado. While my degree has forced me to leave state to acquire the qualifications necessary to eventually take the nationally recognized interior design certification exams (NCIDQ), my hope is one day to return to Alaska and practice interior design professionally. However, due to the lack of registration for professional designers in Alaska I am considering possibly working in a state with professional registration in the best interest of my future career and advancement opportunities. I believe interior designers are educated, experienced, credentialed experts in their field, well 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)).
- Currently there is no requirement that persons providing commercial interior design services in public buildings in Alaska be credentialed to protect public safety. HB 61 registration qualifications include nationally accredited interior design degrees, required hands-on training, passing a 3-part, 11-hour national examination in full, becoming registered in Alaska to practice, and maintaining compliance with ongoing professional development requirements as would be established by the AELS Board.
- HB 61 is voluntary. Architects are exempt from it; non-registered interior designers may work in the commercial field under a registered commercial interior designer or registered architect or directly provide interior design for residential single-family to 4-plex structures. Anyone may continue to call themselves an interior designer in Alaska.
- HB 61 will 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 within the established limited scope.
- I am aware of the American Institute of Architect's 20+ year policy that publicly opposes registration for interior designers. The history and evolution of the profession of interior design has gone through a lot of change in the last 120 years from an art form of housewives to a profession centered in evidenced based research directed by science, codes and laws in the best interest of public human safety and overall occupant well-being. The AIA's policy is outdated and focuses on a small group of individuals involved in a project rather than the entire interdisciplinary team as a whole. The policy limits the vast collective knowledge that could be brought to the table in the best interest of the client, design team and community. In their 2020 Annual Report, the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) included a resolution based on the work and recommendation

of an internal task force to sunset their 20-year stance which is similar to AIA's current opposition to interior design licensing, citing that their existing position "does not properly reflect the current state of interior design licensing and is not in alignment with NCARB's efforts to support multi-disciplinary Member Boards that regulate architect and interior design." (NCARB, 2020, p.28) [View the Full Report Here](#). I believe NCARB's resolution, intended for consideration at their 2021 annual business meeting, is a clear indication that AIA is stuck in an outdated and misinformed way of thinking that is not universal amongst the profession of architecture.

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, encourage small business, and those earning interior design degrees "outside" to return home for professional registration similar to students like myself.

Sincerely,

Chelsey Beardsley, ASID Student Member

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [Pakak Boerner](#)  
**To:** [Joey Bosworth](#)  
**Subject:** FW: ECI in Support of HB 61  
**Date:** Friday, April 16, 2021 10:08:14 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[2021-04-06 ECI Letter in Support of HB 61.pdf](#)

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**From:** Jason Swift [REDACTED] >

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 6, 2021 10:03 AM

**To:** House Labor and Commerce <House.Labor.And.Commerce@akleg.gov>; Rep. Zack Fields <Rep.Zack.Fields@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ivy Spohnholz <Rep.Ivy.Spohnholz@akleg.gov>; Rep. Calvin Schrage <Rep.Calvin.Schrage@akleg.gov>; Rep. Liz Snyder <Rep.Liz.Snyder@akleg.gov>; Rep. David Nelson <Rep.David.Nelson@akleg.gov>; Rep. James Kaufman <Rep.James.Kaufman@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ken McCarty <Rep.Ken.McCarty@akleg.gov>

**Cc:** Rep. Matt Claman <Rep.Matt.Claman@akleg.gov>; Brian Meissner [REDACTED]

**Subject:** ECI in Support of HB 61

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





**From:** [Pakak Boerner](#)  
**To:** [Joey Bosworth](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support HB 61 Professional Registration for Commercial Interior Designers  
**Date:** Friday, April 16, 2021 10:06:12 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image005.png](#)  
[image006.png](#)

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**From:** Tiffany Coffman [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, April 16, 2021 9:56 AM  
**To:** Rep. Ivy Spohnholz <Rep.Ivy.Spohnholz@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Support HB 61 Professional Registration for Commercial Interior Designers

House Labor and Commerce Committee  
Dear Representative Spohnholz, Co-Chair

### **Please Support HB 61 Professional Registration for Commercial Interior Designers**

As a commercial interior designer of public-occupancy buildings my professional decisions directly impact public health, safety, and welfare in most aspects of my work. Through completing a rigorous program, earning a Bachelor of Science in Interior Design from an accredited university, hands-on training, and passing an international 3-part exam, as a commercial interior designer I am 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:

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 who earned 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,

Tiffany Coffman, ASID, NCIDQ, LEED Green Associate, Bettisworth North

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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

Tiffany Coffman, ASID, NCIDQ, LEED Green Associate | Interior Designer

Main. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**BETTISWORTH**  
**NORTH**



**From:** [Pakak Boerner](#)  
**To:** [Joey Bosworth](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support Registration for Alaska Commercial Interior Designers  
**Date:** Friday, April 16, 2021 10:08:03 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)

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**From:** Michael P. Carlson [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 7, 2021 4:07 PM  
**To:** Rep. Ivy Spohnholz <Rep.Ivy.Spohnholz@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Support Registration for Alaska Commercial Interior Designers

I am writing to encourage you to advance HB61 out of committee. I am a registered architect with 45 years of experience working in Alaska and 37 years as a principal and owner of the Anchorage architectural firm MCG/Explore Design (formerly McCool Carlson Green). I have worked on many of Alaska's most complex and prominent buildings including Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport C Terminal, the Nesbett Courthouse, UAA's Alaska Airline Center, the Rasmussen Wing at the Anchorage Museum and many and many K-12 schools just to name a few. I have had the distinct pleasure of working with many of Alaska's interior designers both as consultants and within our firm over the years and they have always impressed me as extremely competent, technically savvy and wholly committed to serving all the needs of their clients. I have no concerns whatsoever in allowing them to take legal responsibility for their work by creating a formal state registration process. I have reviewed the policies and procedures outlined in HB61 and they appear to be very comparable to the education, experience and testing requirements the state has for architectural registration. It is a well thought out program that will assure the public that registered interior designers have been properly vetted to perform interior design services.

Our firm currently employs 4 interior designers, one of them is also a principal and owner of the company. In fact, we recently restructured our company from a 'Professional Corporation' to an LLC to allow interior designers to purchase ownership shares. This restructuring would not have been required if the State provided a path to registration for interior designers. Providing that path to interior designers will increase business opportunities for Alaska's small businesses and provide beneficial competition for the public who seeks to employ interior designers. I welcome providing interior designers the ability to accept legal responsibility for their good work and believe that this can only improve the quality and competency of service that they and other Alaska interior designers provide to the citizens of Alaska.

So again, please support HB61 and help it advance quickly and efficiently through the required process. Thank you for your consideration of my thoughts,

**Michael Carlson, AIA/CCS**

Principal Architect

M [REDACTED]



[www.exploredesign.com](http://www.exploredesign.com)



## McCool Carlson Green is now MCG Explore Design!

We're proud to announce a bold new direction for our firm as [MCG Explore Design](#). We're still the same team with the same commitment to our clients and the community. This isn't a superficial change and we're excited to share what Explore Design means to us over the next few weeks and months. Please visit our website and follow us on Facebook to be a part of the conversation.

**PLEASE NOTE:** With a new name comes a new website and (as you may have noticed) this new email address. We will still monitor our old ones on a daily basis, but this would be a good time to update your contact information. Thank you for your support!



**HB61**  
**RELATING TO THE REGISTRATION OF COMMERCIAL INTERIOR DESIGNERS**

**House Committee on Labor and Commerce**  
**Public Hearing - April 19, 2021**

Testimony of  
Katherine S. Setser, NCIDQ, ASID, IIDA, IDEC  
Department of Architecture + Interior Design, Miami University, Oxford, OH  
Director, Council for Interior Design Accreditation

Madam Chair, Mr. Chair, and Committee members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information in support of House Bill 61. I am Katherine Setser, an NCIDQ certified interior designer, researcher, and educator. I serve as a technical advisor for the development of several codes, including the National Fire Protection Association's NFPA 101 Life Safety Code, currently used in every U.S. state.

I ask the Committee on Labor and Commerce to support passage of HB61 as a means to improve health, safety, and welfare within the built environment for Alaskans.

The last 20 years of my professional and academic career have been devoted largely to the realm of forensic design, that is, to the analysis and research of design projects that have failed. I have witnessed and studied in-depth the impact that improper design of interior space can have on public health, safety, and welfare, and the serious potential for public harm from unregulated interior designers in commercial spaces.

The proper selection and specification of interior materials, finishes and content are essential to an occupant's ability to safely exit a building during a fire or other emergency. This is precisely the domain of the registered commercial interior designer.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), the proper selection of interior space content is a primary determinant of whether accidents become tragedies. In fact, the NFPA states that interior finishes and furnishings in public assembly spaces have a greater impact on the protection of life and property than any other element with the exception of the actual fire ignition source itself. This interior content is more important than onsite fire protection such as fire alarms and sprinkler systems. It's more important than exiting requirements such as maximum occupancy, number and arrangement of exits, even emergency signage and lighting.

It's simple. The faster a fire develops, the greater the threat to the occupants of a building and their ability to exit safely. The appropriate selection of interior content slows flame and toxic smoke spread across floor, wall and ceiling coverings and allows additional time for occupants to relocate within, or evacuate from, a building. This is fundamental to the expertise of the residential commercial interior designer.

This is not a small problem. Despite continual updating of fire- and life-safety/building codes, the fire and death rates in the U.S. remain among the deadliest in the industrialized world and the cost – in lives and in dollars – is staggering. Alaska is no exception. Alaska's death rate from fire is more than double that of the national average.

And, although states adopt and enforce rules governing design, construction, repair, and alteration of buildings, the truth is that regulatory systems provide significant oversight *only* in new construction and substantial renovation projects. Over the life of a building, incremental change to interior space, especially finishes and content, is a frequent occurrence, due to changes in ownership and tenancy or deterioration and obsolescence. These largely unregulated modifications far outnumber new construction and significant renovations requiring regulatory oversight. With few exceptions, Alaska jurisdictions, as in most states, often exempt alteration projects that relate to interior finishes and furnishings.

Fire investigations, data, and other evidence expressly points to interior content as consistent, direct, and significant contributing factors in the loss of life and property and are shown to exacerbate the hazard to occupants.

I respectfully request that your Committee acknowledge not only the necessity for regulation of interior design practice in code-regulated, commercial spaces, but also recognize the significant education, experience, and expertise employed by interior design professionals to safeguard public health, safety, and welfare in the built environment. Please support the passage of HB61.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Katherine S. Setser". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Katherine S. Setser  
Department of Architecture + Interior Design  
Miami University  
101 Alumni Hall, 350 E Spring Street  
Oxford, OH 45056