

## Konrad Jackson

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**From:** Lucas Smith <lucas.smith28@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 25, 2025 11:29 PM  
**To:** Senate Labor and Commerce  
**Cc:** Board of AELS (CED sponsored)  
**Subject:** PUBLIC TESTIMONY: SB54

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Senate Labor and Commerce Committee Members:

Interior design is a profession that does *not* warrant a seat at the same table with Engineers and Land Surveyors.

The nature of interior design is artistic. If not exclusively, it is at least *primarily* subjective. It should remain that way.

The impact of interior design on public health, safety, or welfare is insignificant and inconsequential. I should hope that such design work never requires professional certification.

Creating this licensing possibility, as SB54 proposes, introduces a work barrier to some designers. In fact, certification and licensing disproportionately affects those who need employment opportunities most. It costs time and money. It requires a personal investment without a guarantee of return. It requires regular administrative maintenance on the part of many. It requires effort on the part of the board. At times, licensing has the potential to create extreme hassle. All of this discourages those who are interested and qualified. It would also serve to increase the cost of professional services in Alaska by creating an exclusive class of interior design professionals. In doing so it could help fuel inflation.

As an alternative, the requirements for certified or licensed interior designers on projects should be eliminated and prohibited. This would make all work available to any qualified bidder based on qualifications and experience. Qualifications and experience are the exact same criteria used to justify licensing. Why introduce a bureaucratic element when such evaluation can be accomplished during the bidding process through specification. Holding this line would not prohibit experience-based selection as is common on public professional competitive contracts. It would also mitigate inflation by keeping professional services competitive.

In contrast to interior design, the profession of Engineering and Land Surveying is primarily objective. Practical experience requiring extensive knowledge and application of scientific principles is required. The same cannot be said for interior design. If claimed by an interior designer, however, only in the most unique cases could such highly qualified skill be comparable to the level employed by the professions of engineering and land surveying. None come to mind.

Creating a seat on the proposed board should not be about facilitating work on federal contracts, or about creating more bureaucracy to support existing bureaucracy. Maintaining a board is about regulating a profession. It should be done so with professionals of similar, relatable, and co-dependent skillsets because the integrity and success of their professional network depend upon each other. How could an interior designer reasonably claim to relate to the professional practice of engineering and land surveying? How could an interior designer reasonably claim to share professional dependency with engineering or land surveying as a co-equal professional? I will tell you, they cannot. Given this, there can be no justification for a seat on the subject board elevating interior designers to the status of relatable co-dependent professional.

Creating a seat for interior designers on the registration board for architects, engineers, and land surveyors makes as much sense as also creating a seat on the same board representing the Urinal Cake Manufacturers and Suppliers Association. In fact, it doesn't make any sense. Perhaps, as a relatable co-dependent professional, the urinal cake association representative instead deserves a seat with the Alaska Bar Association.

Do not pass SB54!

Sincerely,  
Lucas Smith