



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR MICHAEL J. DUNLEAVY

Department of Commerce, Community,  
and Economic Development

BOARD OF REGISTRATION FOR ARCHITECTS,  
ENGINEERS, AND LAND SURVEYORS

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February 9, 2024

The Honorable Representative Bryce Edmon, Co-Chair  
The Honorable Representative Neal Foster, Co-Chair  
The Honorable Representative DeLena Johnson, Co-Chair  
and Members of the House Finance Committee  
Alaska State Capitol  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Sent via email to House.Finance@akleg.gov

Re: House Bill 159, "An Act relating to registered interior designers and interior design"

Dear Co-Chairs Representative Edmon, Representative Foster and Representative Johnson,

I am writing to update the House Labor and Commerce Committee on actions by the Board of Registration of Architects, Engineers, and Land Surveyors (AELS) related to the regulation of interior design and interior designers. The discussions and actions focused on SB 73 but are relevant to HB 159 since it is a companion bill. At our May 2023 meeting, AELS took the following actions:

1. The Board does not recommend adding the profession of interior design to 08.48 (AELS Board).
2. If SB 73 is advanced by the legislature, the AELS Board offers the following recommendations to CS-D:
  - Remove all references in the bill to AELS Board make up (Section 1, 2, 3 and 38).
  - Remove item (15) of Section 27.
  - In Section 30, delete (B) and revise (D) to meet the following: *"review of drawings and specifications of interior spaces made by regulatory agencies."*
  - In Section 37, revise to read as follows: *"Sec 37. TRANSITION: CURRENT INTERIOR DESIGNERS. Notwithstanding this Act, a person working as an interior designer before the effective date of this Act may continue to practice interior design in the state until 90 days after the effective date of regulations established in 12 AAC 36 or 2 years after the effective date of this Act, whichever comes first, at which time they must register if they wish to practice registered interior design as described in AS 08.48.341."*

The AELS Board has discussed the topic of interior design regulation at length for more than 3 years and held 2 special meetings on SB 73 during the 2023 legislative session. We have also raised concerns through written and verbal testimony during hearings on both SB73 and its predecessor bill from the 32<sup>nd</sup> Alaska Legislature, HB 61. While opinions of individual AELS Board members vary, the majority does not support adding the new profession of interior design to AS 08.48, the statute that authorizes the AELS Board. Discussion encouraged interior design to be regulated under a different framework if regulation is needed or desired.

We appreciate being allowed to engage in discussion about this legislation that, if approved, will add to the Board's responsibilities. Please contact me if you would like more detailed information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey Garness".

Jeffrey Garness, Professional Engineer  
AELS Board Chair