

Florida Legislative Update

We have been keeping our active Certificate holders abreast of the developments in Florida regarding their legislative challenge.

Very early Saturday morning, the Florida legislature adjourned without passing HB 5005 that would have eliminated interior design regulation from Florida law. As has been the case, anyone may call themselves an "interior designer" and practice "interior design." The law only applies to registered interior designers who submit plans for permitting for buildings with public occupancies.

From the time that NCIDQ became aware of the move to deregulate registered interior designers in Florida we have been working with the Interior Design Associations Foundation, Inc. (IDAF) and our colleagues at ASID and IIDA, who were fighting the bill. The designers in Florida rose to the occasion to protect their businesses by contacting their legislators and showing up for rallies at the capitol. The issue was very much a local issue--a move by a state legislator to eliminate regulations and departments from state government--the NCIDQ Examination and our programs were not being questioned. The fight to defeat the bill was primarily political, and therefore IDAF, ASID and IIDA took the lead. At every step, when NCIDQ was requested to provide assistance, we did so.

We thank IDAF and especially NCIDQ Past President Janice Young for all of the work she did to coordinate the fight against this bill. ASID and IIDA organized their members in Florida and sent their staffs to Tallahassee to assist in the effort. All of the organizations within the interior design profession that care about the quality of service interior designers provide to protect the public from harm worked diligently to defeat the legislation.

NCIDQ's Position on Florida Law

Interior Designers Retain Right to Practice in Florida; Deregulation Attempt Fails in Legislature Print May 9, 2011

WASHINGTON, DC—The National Council for Interior Design Qualification, Inc. (NCIDQ) applauds the Florida Legislature for rejecting HB 5005, a bill that would have endangered public safety by no longer requiring interior designers who work on commercial buildings to hold a state license.

Under existing law, interior designers who work in commercial and public spaces – schools, healthcare facilities, offices, daycare centers, retail spaces, dormitories and more – must be licensed by the state. Registered interior designers are educated in design requirements conforming to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), fire codes and methods for reducing indoor pollution, among other public safety measures.

"The rejection of this legislation ensures that all public buildings in Florida will continue to be designed by trained professionals who adhere to the highest forms of both style and public safety," said Patty Blaser, NCIDQ President. "Interior designers undertake years of study to ensure that the interiors of public buildings are not only beautiful, but safe and accessible for everyone."

The 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals recently ruled that the Florida law requiring commercial interior designers to obtain a license to practice is constitutional after the Institute of Justice, which represents a group of interior decorators, challenged the law, claiming the statute censors free speech and interferes with people's ability to earn a living.

In the state of Florida, a registered interior designer, as opposed to other interior stylists, is required to complete a formal post-secondary education, complete at least two years of practical work experience and pass NCIDQ's comprehensive examination. The Florida legislature created this process in 1994 to ensure public facilities are designed and created by professionals who are educated in the latest techniques to protect public safety while facilitating access for all.

You can read the court's decision at: <http://www.ca11.uscourts.gov/opinions/ops/201011052.pdf>