



AIA Board of Directors

Directory of Public Policies and Position Statements

[Archivist's note: this
version was revised
and approved
December 2005]

Revised September 2005

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Introduction

The Public Policies and Position Statements that follow have been approved by the AIA Board of Directors and are in effect until rescinded by the Board.

Public Policies are AIA statements of belief to policy-makers, the public, and the construction industry on issues of public policy affecting the membership, the profession of architecture, or The American Institute of Architects.

Position Statements elaborate on Public Policies or apply them to specific conditions or events.

Commentaries are white papers or other analyses that amplify AIA doctrine by presenting rationale and facts to support adherence to a specific Public Policy or Position Statement.

Once approved by the Board of Directors, all AIA Public Policies and Position Statements are binding on AIA components. Specifically, the Institute's Bylaws state "no act" of an AIA component "shall directly or indirectly nullify or contravene any act or policy of the Institute."

Under certain circumstances, components may be granted exceptions to the policy conformance requirement. Rules for requesting and granting exceptions to Institute Policies may be obtained from the Office of the General Counsel.

Rules governing content, format, review, and adoption of policies and positions are contained in Chapter 9 of the Rules of the Board.

Public Policies and Position Statements

“Meta” Policy

Architecture profoundly affects people. The work of architects is essential to human well being, and architects must embrace their ethical obligation to uphold this public trust.

Public Policy

As members of their communities, architects are professionally obligated to use their knowledge, skill, and experience to engage in civic life.

Supporting Position Statements

1. Architects in Government

The AIA supports the involvement of architects in all levels of public service and encourages the election, appointment, and hiring of licensed architects to positions within federal, state, and local governments.

2. National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)

The AIA supports continued federal funding for the arts through programs administered by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Public Policy

Design, construction, and society are constantly changing. To serve society, architects must commit to continual professional growth through learning, innovation, and exploration.

**Supporting
Position
Statements**

**3.
Mandatory
Continuing
Education**

The AIA maintains that each jurisdiction should mandate a minimum amount of continuing education for architectural licensure renewal. The American Institute of Architects further advocates that any jurisdiction considering continuing education for re-licensure accept The American Institute of Architects continuing education requirement for membership and record keeping system as a means of fulfilling the jurisdiction's requirement.

**4.
Practice
Specialty
Credentialing**

The AIA considers its architect members, by virtue of their license, to be generalists, equipped through education, examination, and experience to capably design a wide range of project types. However, the Institute acknowledges that in certain instances a unique body of knowledge may exist that extends beyond the generalized expertise of many architects. When it is important to clients and the public that such knowledge be recognized, the Institute is committed to considering its merits, using an open process, to evaluate specialty credential programs on a case-by-case basis.

**5.
Research and
Development**

The AIA supports the promotion of research and development directed toward improving our understanding of user needs and increasing the use of sustainable materials and technologies in the built environment.

Public Policy

The practice of architecture should be regulated. The privileges and responsibilities of practice should be extended only to those architects who demonstrate through education, experience, and examination that they are ethically and technically prepared.

**Supporting
Position
Statements**

**6.
Architectural
Practice –
Definition**

The AIA supports a uniform definition of architectural practice that delineates the scope of activities over which each jurisdiction has regulatory control. The definition should follow the recommendations developed by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards.

**7.
Design of
Structures for
Human
Habitation or
Use**

The AIA maintains that it is in the public interest for architects to design all structures primarily intended for human habitation or use. There are considerable differences between architecture and other licensed professions that significantly affect public health, safety, and welfare. The architect's comprehensive education and training encompass the impact of design and technology on the health and well-being of the public and on the built and natural environments. Each jurisdiction has a responsibility to its citizens to ensure that structures used or occupied by the public are designed by licensed architects.

**8.
Architectural
Practice and
Title
Regulations**

In the public interest, the AIA holds that only architects and engineers licensed through examination possess the necessary education, training and experience to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public in the built environment. Other individuals may possess useful skills in designing within the built environment, but fragmentation of responsibility for the building design process endangers and misleads the public as to respective areas of competence and expertise. The AIA opposes practice or title regulation of individuals or groups other than architects and engineers.

**9.
NAAB
Accredited
Degree**

The AIA supports a professional degree from a National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) accredited program as the most appropriate minimum threshold for educational training. Alternative educational pathways in lieu of a NAAB accredited degree should be considered to fulfill educational prerequisites to licensure on an individual candidate basis.

- 10.
Internship and
Professional
Development**

The AIA supports a comprehensive internship with measurable qualitative training criteria. Further, the AIA supports NCARB's Intern Development Program (IDP) and its training areas, which provide interns with the diverse training and experience in architectural practice essential to the preparation for licensure.
- 11.
Examination**

The AIA maintains that passing of the Architect Registration Examination (ARE) is the only acceptable threshold for fulfillment of the examination requirement for licensure. The ARE should test for public protection competencies gained through a combination of professional degree education and practical experience, of candidates once they meet the licensing requirements of the local jurisdiction. The AIA, through its members, should encourage emerging professionals to complete the examination. The profession and society will be best served by a growing number of licensed architects.
- 12.
Timing of the
Architect
Registration
Examination
(ARE)**

The AIA supports architectural registration boards' allowing interns for licensure candidacy to take the ARE following their graduation from a NAAB-accredited degree program and concurrent with enrollment in the Intern Development Program (IDP).
- 13.
Use of the Title
Architect and
Its Derivatives**

The AIA supports protecting the public by reserving the use of the term "architect" and its derivative forms to those individuals licensed as architects. In addition, the AIA supports the use of "architectural intern" or "intern architect" for graduates of NAAB-accredited degree programs.
- 14.
Licensure
Board
Composition**

The AIA supports architectural registration boards that are composed of architects who are residents of the jurisdiction, as well as public members. Architects should comprise a majority of the board and the terms of architectural members should be staggered. Furthermore, the AIA strongly supports the concept of single discipline boards to license architects. In situations where a single discipline board is not statutorily permitted, measures should be taken to ensure that only architects and the appropriate percentage of public members act on architectural issues.
- 15.
Enforcement of
Licensing Laws**

The AIA supports strict enforcement of architectural licensing laws by the jurisdictions and recommends that penalties be assessed for incompetent or improper practice by licensees. Unlicensed practice must be vigorously prosecuted with assessed penalties and injunctions.

**16.
Interstate
Reciprocity and
International
Practice**

The AIA supports the use of uniform criteria for licensure that facilitate reciprocity and do not inhibit the interstate and international practice of architecture. Further, the AIA supports the global collaboration of architects, and the continued promotion of excellence in international education, practice, and design while honoring cultural diversity worldwide. The AIA supports its members' international practices through the benefits of membership and by fostering positive working relationships among architects and international architecture organizations.

**17.
Expanding
Professional
Experience
Settings**

The AIA supports the expansion of IDP Training Settings, as defined by NCARB, to include the broad experiences in which today's interns engage and to address the expanded role that an architect can play in serving society's needs. Time requirements within settings should also be reviewed.

**18.
Interdependence
of Education and
Practice**

The AIA supports the interdependence of practice and education as elements of the profession that, when integrated, enable students, educators, and practitioners to obtain and maintain the knowledge and skills needed to enter and fully participate in the profession, and to achieve design excellence in service to society.

Public Policy

With an obligation to the future of the architecture profession, architects must encourage, recruit, and inspire those who would become architects.

**Supporting
Position
Statements**

**19.
Architecture
Education in
K-12 and
Community
College
Settings**

The AIA supports integrating the art and science of architecture into K-12 core curricula and community college course offerings to enhance students' understanding of the built environment, inspire them to think creatively and critically about livable communities, and encourage them to appreciate the impact of design excellence on the quality of life.

**20.
Mentorship**

The AIA supports its members to recognize and fulfill their obligation to nurture emerging professionals as they advance through all stages of their professional experience, beginning with professional education and progressing through internship and licensure and continuing throughout their career.

**21.
Studio Culture
in Practice and
Education**

The AIA supports a professional practice environment that encourages the essential values of optimism, respect, collaboration, engagement, and innovation. The architectural design studio culture promotes these ideals and should serve as the foundation of degree education and professional practice.

Public Policy

Regulation of the construction industry shapes the built environment. As stakeholders, architects must participate in the development and application of appropriate regulations and standards.

**Supporting
Position
Statements**

**22.
Building Codes
and Standards**

The AIA supports regulation by a single set of comprehensive, coordinated, and contemporary codes and standards, which establish sound threshold values of health, safety, and the protection of the public welfare throughout the United States. To that end, the AIA espouses the development and adoption of model building codes that:

- Include participation by architects and the public in a consensus process;
- Are the product of informed education and research;
- Are without favoritism or bias to any special interest;
- Include provision for a prompt appeals procedure for all that might be aggrieved;
- Are cost-effective in relation to public benefit; and
- Promote building code provisions that set performance rather than prescriptive criteria.

**23.
Building
Permits**

The AIA supports governmental policies, regulatory procedures, and administration that eliminate unnecessary time delays in the construction permitting process.

Public Policy

The financial health of architecture businesses is essential to the future of the profession. Architects should advocate within the law for sound business practices and compensation that reflects the architect's value to society.

**Supporting
Position
Statements**

**24.
Copyright
Protection**

The AIA supports copyright protection of the architect's design work and other intellectual property in order to prevent their unauthorized use.

**25.
Legal Form of
Practice**

The AIA supports architectural practice within any legal structure as long as an architect retains responsible control and individual responsibility for performing architectural services. Within any legal structure the architect performing or in responsible control of the professional services must be identified and that structure must not be used to shield unlicensed practice or shield the practitioner from professional liability

**26.
Project
Delivery:
Alternative
Delivery
Methods**

The AIA maintains that projects can be effectively designed and constructed by a variety of delivery methods including but not limited to Design/Bid/Build, Design/Build, and Negotiated Select Team. The AIA also believes that an architect is most qualified to lead alternative project delivery teams, and advocates that architects should be retained in that role regardless of which delivery method is used.

**27.
Qualifications
Based Selection**

The AIA supports public policies, requirements, and administrative procedures in public and private procurement processes that mandate the open selection of architects on the basis of qualifications and oppose hiring of architects on the basis of fees. Qualifications-based selection is essential to fostering quality design that serves public health and safety in the built environment.

**28.
Association/
Small Business
Health
Insurance**

The AIA supports government policies, programs, and incentives that provide unrestricted access and choice for small businesses and members of trade and professional associations to purchase affordable health care for their employees.

**29.
Tax and
Regulatory
System**

The AIA supports governmental policies, programs, and administration that promote a fair tax code and business regulations that encourage the free enterprise system and the economic well being of the American people, the U.S. construction industry, and the profession of architecture. The AIA opposes the imposition of sales taxes on architecture services.

**30.
Tort Reform**

The AIA supports governmental policies and reforms to minimize lawsuit abuse and to promote the administration of a fair civil liability legal system. Society is best served by legislative and regulatory reforms that curtail the cost and risks of professional liability for architects and their clients without jeopardizing the public interest.

Public Policy

Leadership in design and construction requires collaboration. Architects must encourage and celebrate the contributions of those who bring diverse experiences, views, and needs into the design process.

**Supporting
Position
Statements**

**31.
Civil Rights**

The AIA supports the protection of the human dignity and self worth of all persons and calls for fair, impartial, unbiased, and non prejudicial treatment of all persons in every employment, social, and business transaction.

**32.
Diversity**

The AIA believes that diversity is a cultural ethos – a way of thinking or acting that fosters inclusion, enhancing our membership, our profession, and the quality of life in our communities. Embracing this culture of diversity, all programs and initiatives of the AIA and its members shall reflect the society that we serve, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, physical abilities, or religious beliefs.

**33.
Relationship to
National
Council of
Architectural
Registration
Boards
(NCARB)**

The AIA will participate in the establishment of legislative standards for licensing, monitor the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) activities, and advocate the interests of the architectural profession on those issues being considered by NCARB.

Public Policy

Architecture expresses the values of society and has the power to enhance the quality of life for this and future generations. Architects must advocate for responsible design that results in beautiful and healthy places that respect and accommodate society's diverse cultures and needs.

**Supporting
Position
Statements**

**34.
Accessible
Environment**

The AIA supports governmental policies, programs, and incentives that ensure a built environment that meets the reasonable needs of people with disabilities through accessibility rules and guidelines that are clear, certain, and consistent. Physically disabled individuals should be afforded the means to participate in society to the extent that they are able, through the elimination of physical barriers in a manner that balances the interests of the physically disabled, the public good, and cost effectiveness.

**35.
Affordable
Housing**

The AIA supports governmental policies, programs, and incentives to promote the construction and rehabilitation of more affordable housing units in the U.S. to address an urgent national priority.

**36.
Community
Enhancement
and
Transportation**

The AIA supports governmental policies, programs, and incentives that promote public transportation expenditures that enhance the development of safe, healthy, economically viable, sustainable, and livable communities.

**37.
Protect Historic
Preservation
Tax Credits**

The AIA supports governmental policies, programs, and incentives to preserve and rehabilitate both public and private historic structures.

**38.
Urban and
Regional
Design**

The AIA maintains that planning and design at the urban neighborhood and regional scales are indispensable to the creation of safe, attractive, economically viable and environmentally sustainable communities.

**39.
Art in
Architecture**

The AIA supports public and private building programs that include an appropriate budget for art. The incorporation of art should be an early and integral part of the design process, in order that the art can be fully coordinated with the architecture.

**40.
Design
Excellence in
Public
Architecture**

The AIA supports the creation and preservation of buildings of lasting significance and usefulness that represent the highest ideals of our government and its citizens.

**41.
Government
Procurement:
Stock Plans**

The AIA maintains that society is best served by public building designs that meet the unique and specific requirements inherent in each individual project. Stock plans are not appropriate for most building types and do not meet this lofty goal.

Public Policy

The creation and operation of the built environment require an investment of the earth's resources. Architects must be environmentally responsible and advocate for the sustainable use of those resources.

**Supporting
Position
Statements**

**42.
Energy and the
Built
Environment**

The AIA supports governmental policies, programs, and incentives to encourage energy conservation as it relates to the built environment as well as aggressive development of renewable energy sources. Architects must strive for energy efficiency and waste reduction in the built environment, encourage energy-conscious design and technology, and support a national program for more efficient use of nonrenewable resources and the development of renewable energy sources.

**43.
Sustainable
Buildings**

The AIA supports governmental and private sector policy programs, and incentives to encourage all buildings to exemplify the advantages of sustainable architecture.

**44. Sustainable
Architectural
Practice**

The AIA recognizes a growing body of evidence that demonstrates current planning, design, construction, and real estate practices contribute to patterns of resource consumption that seriously jeopardize the future of the Earth's population. Architects need to accept responsibility for their role in creating the built environment and, consequently, believe we must alter our profession's actions and encourage our clients and the entire design and construction industry to join with us to change the course of the planet's future.

**45. Sustainable
Rating Systems**

The AIA supports the development and use of rating systems and standards that promote the design and construction of communities and buildings that contribute to a sustainable future.