

# Committee on the Environment

an **AIA** Knowledge Community

Chers collègues:

It's time to talk about the Paris accord from Portland to Pittsburgh to Paris and wherever COTE members reside. Every month this year has brought a new sense of urgency for our role as architects and this month is no exception with the decision by the President to withdraw from the Paris accord. But as we have seen with other recent events, the good news is this decision is galvanizing people across the globe to re-commit to meeting the critical and ambitious goals of the Paris accord.

Our role in carbon drawdown through the design, construction, and operations of the built environment is essential to meeting those goals.

This newsletter focuses on some of the most recent actions and ideas since the announcement:



- the terrific statement from AIA's President Tom Vonier issued on June 1, the same day as the President's decision
- a call to action by Tom Jacobs of [Architects Advocate](#)—an advocacy group closely aligned with COTE's Advocacy initiative
- a profile of Varun Kohli, AIA, Principal and sustainable design leader at HOK/NY who brings research and data to global projects to reach deep green goals. This completes our introductions of the three new COTE Advocacy Group (AG) members. If you're interested in serving on the AG in the future, look for the call for nominations later this year.

One other idea—let's think about how we each can reach out to the many cities, states, institutions and businesses who have signed onto the "[We Are Still In](#)" initiative. The list already includes architecture firms of all sizes such as HJKessler Associates, Lake|Flato Architects, and [Perkins+Will](#)—why not [add yours](#)? Share your ideas on the COTE KnowledgeNet [discussion board](#) or the AIA COTE [LinkedIn page](#). This is a tremendous opportunity for architects to demonstrate our value on a front-page topic of critical importance.

A bientôt,

MAL

Mary Ann Lazarus, FAIA, LEED AP BD+C  
2017 Chair, AIA Committee on the Environment Advisory Group

## Architects oppose US withdrawal from climate agreement



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By Thomas Vonier, FAIA

The AIA will not retreat from its long-established efforts to conserve energy and to deploy renewable resources in buildings. We will continue to lead in efforts to curb the use of fuels and technologies that needlessly pollute our atmosphere and harm our environment. This makes good sense economically, and it is in the best interests of those we serve: our clients and the public. [Read more >](#)



## Bipartisan Climate Solutions Caucus: A model of collaboration in post-Paris reality

By Tom Jacobs, AIA

It is hard to imagine a more anachronistic action than the recent US withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement. Never in history

has it been more clear that what sets humanity apart is our ability to collaborate, and never has it been more urgent that we meet the global and complex challenges of our time by connecting and coordinating.

[Read more >](#)



## Varun Kohli joins AIA COTE Advisory Group

By Kira Gould

Building on nearly 20 years of experience, Kohli advocates for the integration of design processes and environmental analytics. As a part of the COTE AG, he looks forward to “helping create pragmatic informational tools for the architecture community that will allow all of us to design more environmentally responsive projects.” [Read more >](#)

## COTE Across the Country

### New Living Building Pilot Program in Seattle

From AIA COTE Seattle: A new program has been gaining traction, as developers can get additional FAR for pursuing portions of the Living Building Challenge. The goal is to close the gap between current code limits and ideal solutions. Want to propose this for your own jurisdiction? [Learn more about the program >](#)

## Submit a biophilic project



The International Living Future Institute is now accepting submissions for the Stephen R. Kellert Biophilic Design Award in honor of Stephen R. Kellert, a pioneer in articulating and applying Biophilic Design principles to the built environment. Exemplary projects will be recognized globally as leaders in the built environment during a Greenbuild Conference shoulder event in November 2017.

**Submissions due August 31**

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