Board of Directors

# Directory of Public Policies and Position Statements

As amended by the Board of Directors
September 2015

AIA Directory of Public Policies and Position Statements

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Policies and Position Statements that follow have been approved by the AIA Board of Directors and are in effect until rescinded by the Board.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

**I.    Category: The Architect**

***A. Public Policy: Civic Engagement***    *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. Civic Engagement**    The AIA believes that society and the profession benefit from civically engaged architects, and components shall actively support members who wish to become civically engaged. Components shall not adopt policies that could prohibit civically engaged members from participating in component activities except to the degree such policies are required by applicable laws or regulations.
(*approved September 2015, through December 31, 2018*)

**2. Art and Architecture**    The AIA supports public and private building programs that include an appropriate budget for the introduction of art integrated into the project so that it complements the architecture, when appropriate, into all project types.  The integration of art should be an early and essential part of the design process, so that art can be fully coordinated with architecture. In support of this premise, the AIA recommends continued government federal funding for the arts through programs administered by the National Endowment for the Arts and other offerings funding opportunities available at the state and local levels.
(*approved September 2015, through December 31, 2018*)

**B. Public Policy: Professional Development**

*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**

**1. Mandatory Continuing Education**

The AIA maintains that each jurisdiction should mandate a minimum amount of continuing education for architectural licensure renewal. The AIA supports a uniform standard for HSW continuing education requirements across all jurisdictions. The AIA 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. Emeritus architects should not be required to fulfill continuing education requirements, unless they wish to resume the practice of architecture.
(*approved September 2015, through December 31, 2018*)

**2. Practice Specialty Credentialing**

The AIA considers its architect members, by virtue of their license, equipped through education, experience, and practice to capably design a wide range of project types. When it is important to clients and the public that specialized knowledge is necessary, the Institute is committed to evaluating specialty credential programs.
(*approved September 2015, through December 31, 2018*)

**3. Research and Development**

The AIA supports the promotion of research and development of materials, technologies, and practices that advance client and user needs, maintain the protection of the public health, safety, and welfare, and improve the quality of the built environment.
(*approved September 2015, through December 31, 2018*)

***C. Public Policy: Regulation of Architecture***

*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**

**1. Definition of Professional Practice and Use of the Title Architect**

The AIA supports a uniform definition of the "practice of architecture" that delineates the scope of services a registered architect may perform as stipulated by regulatory controls of the local jurisdiction. The definition should follow the recommendations developed by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards. Furthermore, the AIA supports protecting the public by reserving the use of the term "architect" to those individuals licensed as architects. The AIA further recommends that all jurisdictions implement a category designated as Emeritus or Retired, for persons who have held a license to practice architecture but have retired and are no longer in practice.
(*approved September 2015, through December 31, 2018*)

**2. Design of Structures for Human Occupancy or Use**

The AIA maintains that to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public, only architects should program and design all structures primarily intended for human occupancy or use.  Architects are uniquely qualified through education, experience, examination, and practice to lead the design process to design buildings. The process of planning and designing the construction of buildings is complex, so sound professional judgment of an architect is needed before and throughout the design process and in construction.  Therefore, it is incumbent on each jurisdiction that has a responsibility to the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens to ensure that the architect is engaged early in planning and managing the design of buildings.
(*approved September 2015, through December 31, 2018*)

**3. Practice and Title Regulations in the Built Environment**

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 assist these licensed professionals in shaping the built environment, but fragmentation of responsible control of the building design process including interior architectural elements as defined by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards 2014-2015 Model Regulations 100.903, endangers and misleads the public as to respective areas of competence and expertise. The AIA generally opposes practice or title regulation of individuals or groups other than architects and engineers for the design of buildings.
(*approved September 2015, through December 31, 2018*)

**4.
Interstate
Reciprocity and
International
Practice for
Architects**

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.
(*approved September 2015, through December 31, 2018*)

**5.
Professional
Licensure and
Examination for
Architects**

The AIA maintains that examination is an essential requirement for licensure. Such examination should test for public protection competencies, including health, safety, and welfare, that are gained through a combination of appropriate education and practical experience. The AIA, through its members, encourages licensure-track emerging professionals to complete the examination process at their earliest practical opportunity.  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 build upon the knowledge and skills needed to enter and fully participate in the profession, and to achieve design excellence in service to society.  To this end, the AIA supports architectural registration boards' allowing emerging professionals for licensure candidacy to take registration examinations following their graduation from a NAAB-accredited degree program and concurrent with enrollment in the Intern Development Program (IDP).
*(approved September 2015, through December 31, 2018*)

**6.
Architectural
Education and
Training
Requirements**

The AIA supports a professional degree from a National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) accredited program as the most appropriate minimum threshold for architectural education. Consideration should be given to alternative educational pathways, in lieu of a NAAB-accredited degree, as a means to fulfill educational prerequisites to licensure, on an individual candidate basis.  In addition, 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 emerging professionals with diverse training and experience in architectural practice.
*(approved September 2015, through December 31, 2018*)

**7.
Architectural
Licensure Board
Composition and
Law Enforcement**

The AIA supports architectural registration boards that are composed of architects and public members who are residents of the jurisdiction. 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.  The AIA supports strict enforcement of architectural licensing laws by each jurisdiction and recommends that disciplinary action be imposed for incompetent or improper practice. Further, the AIA strongly supports vigorous prosecution including seeking penalties and injunctions against those individuals engaged in the unlicensed practice of architecture.
*(approved September 2015, through December 31, 2018*)

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| **D. Public Policy: Future of the Profession** | *With an obligation to the future of the architecture profession, architects must encourage, recruit, and inspire those who would become architects.* |

**Supporting Position Statements**

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|---|---|
| **1. Architecture Awareness in Education** | The AIA supports integrating the art and science of architecture into K-12 core curricula and post-secondary education. Course offerings should enhance the understanding of the built environment, and inspire creative and critical thinking about the importance of healthy buildings, sustainable design, and livable communities that positively impact quality of life. (*approved September 2015, through December 31, 2018*) |
| **2. Mentorship** | The AIA supports its members in fulfilling their professional obligation to mentor emerging professionals as they advance throughout their career. Additionally, those members who supervise individuals engaged in the IDP shall reasonably assist in proper and timely documentation in accordance with that program. (*approved September 2015, through December 31, 2018*) |
| **3. Practice and Education Cultures** | The AIA supports a professional practice environment ("office culture") that encourages the essential values of optimism, respect, sharing, engagement, and innovation. The architectural design studio culture should promote these ideals as the foundation of degree education and extend these values broadly into a career in professional practice. (*approved September 2015, through December 31, 2018*) |

**II.    Category:**
**The Practice**

***A. Public Policy:***  *Regulation of the construction industry shapes the built environment.  As*
***Construction***   *stakeholders, architects must participate in the development and application of*
***Industry***      *appropriate regulations and standards.*
***Regulation***

**Supporting**
**Position**
**Statements**

**1.**              The AIA supports regulation by a single set of comprehensive, coordinated,
**Building Codes**   and contemporary codes and standards, which establish sound threshold
**and Standards**   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.

(*approved December 2013, through December 31, 2016*)

**2.**              The AIA supports governmental policies, regulatory procedures, and
**Building Permits**  administration that eliminate unnecessary time delays in the construction
permitting process.
(*approved December 2013, through December 31, 2016*)

**B. Public Policy: The Business of Architecture**

*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**

**1. Copyright Protection**

The AIA supports copyright protection of the architect's design work and other intellectual property in order to prevent their unauthorized use.
(*approved December 2013, through December 31, 2016*)

**2. 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.
(*approved December 2013, through December 31, 2016*)

**3. Project Delivery**

The AIA believes collaborative project delivery processes enhance the quality, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability of our built environment. This can best be achieved through industry-wide adoption of approaches to project delivery characterized by early and consistent involvement of owners, architects, engineers, constructors, fabricators and end users in an environment of trust, fair compensation, clearly defined goals and transparency.

There are several viable project delivery models in the marketplace that promote such early collaboration.  The AIA believes architects are uniquely qualified and positioned to lead the development of the project and provide architectural services for all project delivery methods. Architectural services may include predesign services, project management, programming, design, construction documentation, and construction administration for building projects.

Architects have a professional and ethical responsibility to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public in all Project Delivery methods. In addition The AIA believes that Architects have a professional and ethical responsibility to represent the client's interests, including the need to provide prudent design guidance to the owner.
(*approved December 2013, through December 31, 2016*)

**4.**
**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 health, safety, and welfare in the built environment.
(*approved December 2013, through December 31, 2016*)

**5.**
**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 any sales and usage taxes on professional services.
(*approved December 2013, through December 31, 2016*)

**6.**
**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.
(*approved December 2013, through December 31, 2016*)

**7.**
**Interoperability**

The AIA believes that all industry-supporting software must facilitate, not inhibit, project planning, design, construction, commissioning and lifecycle management. This software must support non-proprietary, open standards for auditable information exchange and allow for confident information exchanges across applications and across time. This is best accomplished through professional, public- and private- sector adoption of open and interoperable software standards. The AIA encourages its members and other industry organizations to assume a leadership role in the ongoing development of open standards.
(*approved December 2013, through December 31, 2016*)

**III.**
**Category:**
**The World**

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

**Supporting**
**Position**
**Statements**

**1.**
**Civil Rights**

The AIA supports the promotion of human and civil rights, the universal respect for human dignity, and the unbiased treatment of all persons in employment, civic, and business transactions.
(*approval December 2014, through December 9, 2017*)

**2.**
**Diversity**

The AIA recognizes that diversity is a cultural ethos – a way of thinking or acting that fosters inclusion and enhances 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 practices.  The AIA supports the development of policies and programs that endeavor to ensure equal access to professional degrees in architecture for those who are underrepresented in our profession.
(*approved December 2014, through December 9, 2017*)

**3.**
**Relationship to**
**National Council**
**of Architectural**
**Registration**
**Boards (NCARB)**

The AIA will participate in the establishment of legislative standards for licensing, collaborate with the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB), and advocate the interests of the architectural profession on those issues being considered by NCARB, including the improvement of access and conditions for those aspiring to be part of the profession.
(*approved December 2014, through December 9, 2017*)

**B.  Public Policy:**
**Architectural**
**Design**
**Matters**

*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**

**1.**
**Accessible**
**Environment**

The AIA supports governmental programs, incentives, and policies, including clear and consistent accessibility rules and guidelines, that ensure a built environment that meets the reasonable needs of people with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities should be afforded the means to participate in society to the extent that they are able, through the elimination of physical barriers and through universal design principles that balance the interests of an inclusive society.
(*approved December 2014, through December 9, 2017*)

**2.**
**Housing**

The AIA believes that access to housing is a fundamental right. The AIA supports governmental policies, programs, and incentives to promote the design, construction, renovation and rehabilitation of safe, healthy, and sustainable housing within the means of all Americans.
(*approved December 2014, through December 9, 2017*)

**3.**
**Livable**
**Communities**

The AIA recognizes that planning and design that integrates transportation, housing, and land-use policies at the neighborhood, community, and regional scales are prerequisites to the creation of safe, attractive, walkable, and sustainable communities. The AIA supports governmental policies, programs, and incentives that promote well-designed communities and maximize public participation in an inclusive community planning process.
(*approval December 2014, through December 9, 2017)*

**4.**
**Historic**
**Preservation**

The AIA supports governmental policies, programs, and incentives to preserve and rehabilitate diverse historic structures, sites, and places.
(*approved December 2014, through December 9, 2017*)

**5.**
**Design Excellence in Publicly Funded Projects**

The AIA supports the creation and preservation of publicly funded buildings, places, and projects of lasting significance and usefulness that represent the highest ideals of citizens and their government.  Society is best served by public building designs that meet the specific requirements inherent in each individual project and site.
(*approved December 2014, through December 9, 2017*)

**6.**
**Design and Health**

The AIA advocates for policies, programs, research, and practices that promote health through design.  Good design advances equitable access to well-being, physical activity, safety, and environmental quality, among other measurable health benefits. Working in collaboration with public health professionals and allied organizations, architects implement design solutions that inspire and facilitate healthy environments for all members of society.
(*approved December 2014, through December 9, 2017*)

**C. Public Policy: Architects are Environmentally Responsible**

*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**

**1.
Sustainable Architectural Practice and the Built Environment**

The AIA recognizes that current planning, design, construction, and real estate practices contribute to patterns of resource consumption that will inhibit the sustainable future of the Earth.  Architects, as the leaders in design of the built environment, are responsible to act as stewards of the Earth.  Consequently, we encourage communities to join with us in changing the course of the planet's future by supporting governmental and private sector policy programs, including the development, evaluation, and use of codes, standards and evidence-based rating systems, that promote the design, preservation, and construction of sustainable communities and high-performance buildings.
*(approved December 2014, through December 9, 2017)*

**2.
Energy and the Built Environment**

The AIA supports governmental policies, programs, and incentives that encourage energy conservation as it relates to the built environment as well as the development and harvesting of energy from renewable sources. Architects are encouraged to promote energy efficiency and waste reduction in the built environment to advance the goal of achieving carbon neutral buildings by the year 2030.
(*approved December 2014, through December 9, 2017*)

**3.
Materials and the Built Environment**

The AIA recognizes that building materials impact the environment and human health before, during, and after their use.  Knowledge of the life-cycle impacts of building materials is integral to improving the craft, science, and art of architecture.  The AIA encourages architects to promote transparency in materials' contents and in their environmental and human health impacts.
*(approved December 2014, through December 9, 2017)*

**4.
Resilience**

Buildings and communities are subjected to destructive forces from fire, storms, earthquakes, flooding, and even intentional attack.  The challenges facing the built environment are evolving with climate change, environmental degradation, and population growth.  Architects have a responsibility to design a resilient environment that can more successfully adapt to natural conditions and that can more readily absorb and recover from adverse events. The AIA supports policies, programs, and practices that promote adaptable and resilient buildings and communities.
*(approved December 2014, through December 9, 2017)*

**5.**
**Eminent Domain**

The AIA recognizes that eminent domain can be a necessary tool for government to secure land for the reasonable implementation of publicly owned projects. Only under special and unique circumstances should eminent domain be used for projects that will ultimately revert to private ownership. In these circumstances, eminent domain should be considered a tool of last resort and only be applied when there is a clear and compelling public need and benefit demonstrated after an open, broad-based, and transparent community planning process. In all cases, eminent domain should be applied in ways that fairly consider the value of existing land uses and communities, while respecting citizens' rights, all community stakeholders, and community history.

(*approved December 2014, through December 9, 2017*)