



CODY HORLACHER

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 33RD ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

(608) 266-5715
Toll-Free: (888) 529-0033
Rep.Horlacher@legis.wi.gov

P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708-8952

May 18th, 2021

Chairman Sortwell and Assembly Regulatory Reform Committee Members,

Thank you for holding a Public Hearing on AB 320 related to registration and scope of practice of interior designers.

Currently, Wisconsin has a voluntary registration option for qualified interior designers. This registration requires industry recognized credentialing and rigorous standardized testing on topics like building codes, fire safety, and construction regulation. However, Wisconsin's registered Interior Designers must still jump through additional bureaucratic hoops to be able to independently utilize their knowledge and qualifications in the state.

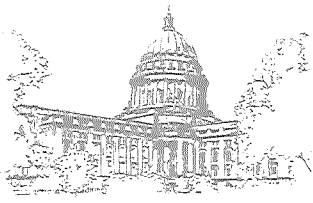
We are introducing this bill to join 11 other US states, Washington DC, and Puerto Rico in eliminating a costly procedural step that registered interior designers must go through to be able to conduct business. Under current law, for public building projects requiring building permits, registered interior designers must pay for an architect's review and approval of the interior designer's completed, non-structural interior design drawings before they may be submitted for plan review and approval by the local building department.

Registered interior designers are trained in interior nonstructural and nonloadbearing design and are prevented from making any kind of structural changes to a building; however, they are still required to get an architect's approval in order to submit interior design drawings to building/permit departments for plan approval. To obtain an architect's review and stamped approval, the interior designer must pay a percentage of the total project cost to that architect or architectural firm for those services. This review is often not indicative of a thorough review of the already competently drafted design drawings, but rather a passive fulfillment of an obligation because registered interior designers have no construction document stamp/seal of their own.

Allowing registered interior designers to seal their own drawings will enable them to deliver an interior build-out project faster, hire fewer outside consultants, and compete for more interior, nonstructural projects. The option to engage an interior designer, thus increasing competition and lowering design costs, is a financial benefit to the client as well.

Nationally, nearly 83% of interior design firms are small businesses of four or fewer employees and a vast majority of these businesses are women and/or minority-owned. This sensible ability will allow these small businesses to grow and compete in the construction industry.

I appreciate your consideration of this bill and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.



STATE SENATOR LaTonya Johnson

WISCONSIN STATE SENATE

6TH DISTRICT

Assembly Committee on Regulatory Licensing Reform
Testimony on Assembly Bill 320
May 18, 2021

Good morning members of the committee,

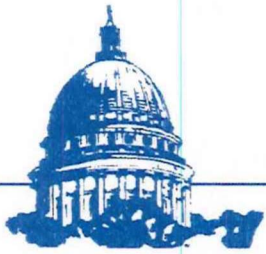
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of this proposal—Assembly Bill 320 (AB 320)—which, among other changes, requires DSPS to establish rules that will allow registered interior designers to stamp and seal their own plans. This bill modernizes our state credentialing regulations for interior designers to recognize their high level of education and training and allow designers to work independently at the top of their scope of practice.

The ability to stamp and seal construction documents for building permits is an essential part of a design professional's practice. Upon passage of AB 320, Wisconsin would join the growing number of states allowing qualified interior designers to stamp and seal their own design documents for non-structural construction projects. In Wisconsin, this practice right is granted to architects and engineers, but denied to registered interior designers, even for projects that are completely non-structural. This architectural oversight is unnecessary given the comparable interior design expertise and educational requirements between the two professions, and puts registered interior designers at a competitive disadvantage in the marketplace for design projects. The current requirements also cost consumers money by adding additional costs to projects—usually a percentage of the total project cost—for this extra approval of plans that have already been drafted and completed by a qualified interior designer.

AB 320 will empower interior designers to operate independently of architectural firms and provide for greater competition for design contracts. It will also alleviate disparities among design professionals by putting interior design, which has been a common entry point for women in the design professions, on an equal footing with architecture when providing similar services.

As you will hear from practitioners in the field, registered interior designers are extremely accomplished professionals who have the training and experience necessary to draft design plans in a way that protects public health and safety, and Wisconsin should recognize this fact by allowing them to sign and seal their own plans for non-structural interior construction projects.

Once again, thank you to my co-authors, Senator Kooyenga, Representative Horlacher, and Representative Stubbs for their work on this bill, and thank you, committee members, for your consideration of this important proposal.



DALE KOOYENGA
STATE SENATOR · 5TH DISTRICT

State Capitol · P.O. Box 7882 · Madison, WI 53707-7882 · (608) 266-2512

May 18, 2021

TO: Members of the Assembly Committee on Regulatory Licensing Reform
FR: Senator Dale Kooyenga
RE: Support for AB 320 – Streamlining the practice of interior design and reducing barriers to entry into the profession

Thank you for holding a hearing on Assembly Bill 320. This bill has bipartisan support and will allow Wisconsin to join 17 other states in eliminating a costly procedural step that registered interior designers must go through in order to complete projects.

Wisconsin has a voluntary registration option for interior designers. This registration requires industry-recognized credentialing and rigorous testing. However, Wisconsin's registered interior designers still must jump through additional, often costly hoops to be able to utilize their knowledge and qualifications and finish a project.

Under current law, for commercial projects, registered interior designers must pay for and get approval from an architect on remodeling plans. An architect's stamp of approval is required despite the fact that these professionals are trained and prevented from making any kind of structural changes.

The seals provided by the architect cost money, typically a percentage of the total project cost. And although costly, these seals often don't indicate a thorough review but rather a passive fulfillment of an obligation.

Allowing registered interior designers to seal their own remodeling plans will enable them to deliver an interior build-out project faster, hire fewer outside consultants, and compete for more projects. The seal privilege will allow interior design firms—often women-owned businesses—the ability to grow and compete in the construction industry

Additionally, this bill aims to reduce barriers to entering the interior design field by eliminating burdensome registration standards that advocates in the field have identified. Nationally, developers rely on the trusted NCIDQ exam and often require interior designers to have passed the exam to be eligible to work on their projects. This bill brings the state in line with the national industry standard and eliminates unnecessary additional requirements.

Thank you for hearing AB 320. I respectfully ask for your support.



May 18, 2021

Proponent Testimony, Wisconsin Assembly Bill 320

Testimony before the Wisconsin Assembly Committee on Regulatory Licensing Reform

Melissa Destree, AIA, IIDA, WRID
President of Destree Design Architects, Inc.
222 W. Washington Ave #310
Madison, WI 53703

Residence – 601 N. Segoe Road #406, Madison, WI

I support Assembly Bill #320, providing Wisconsin Registered Interior Designers (WRID) the practice right to seal and submit design and construction drawings for non-structural interior environments.

I am a licensed architect and Wisconsin registered interior designer. I have both a Bachelor of Science in Architecture and Masters of Architecture from UW Milwaukee. I lead a thriving Women Owned (WBE) architecture and interior design practice going on 21 years strong. We have worked throughout the State of Wisconsin and our projects extend across five continents. You may be familiar with some of my interior design projects on the Capitol Square: The Park Hotel renovation, Coopers Tavern and Fromagination – the Cheese Store.

I am a past president of AIA Wisconsin, a statewide Society of the American Institute of Architects (AIA-WI) and member for over 27 years. An organization I have great pride in. However, I do not support their economic protectionist position which also devalues the contributions Wisconsin Registered Interior Designers bring to the profession. As an architect, I do not fear acknowledging an interior designer's expertise, their unique skill set and their technical abilities.

I am a strong advocate for the evolving profession of Interior Design.

- There is constant market **demand** for interior build-outs and renovations in office and retail sectors that are underserved by architects. Registered Interior Designers are more than qualified to fill the void in the non-structural, non-loadbearing sector.
- Provides **options for Clients** with goals to improve their interior environment.
- **Provides greater business Opportunities** to interior designers, a profession that is 90% female in Wisconsin. Reinforcing diversity in our design and construction industry.
- This type of legislation is a model for limiting bureaucracy. This is a voluntary registration, not mandatory licensing. Only qualified and registered Interior designers with the State will be eligible to stamp and seal interior documents.



DESTREE
architecture & design

- This legislation will make Registered Interior Designers liable and responsible for their own work.
- This legislation provides a level playing field. Are you aware that licensed structural engineers have the ability to stamp interior build-out drawings in Wisconsin? However, a Registered Interior Designer, expert in this sector, educated, successfully passing an 11 hour nationally recognized exam, does not.

Regarding Examination & Registrations:

There are indeed differences between Architects and Interior Designers. Architects work within the entire exterior, structural and loadbearing domains of construction. Interior Designers focus on the interior non-structural portion of a building. Each national exam process, NCIDQ for Interior Designers and ARE for Architects focuses on equivalent complexities to each profession. Interior designers do not claim their credentials are equal to those of architects. Interior design credentials are different because the scope of practice in this bill is vastly different than the scope of practice of Architecture in Wisconsin. This bill explicitly excludes what interior designers will not be eligible to do.

Opponents suggest:

Interior design credentials are not adequate to perform the scope of work in AB 320. Having taken the architectural path and participating as an advisor for over 5 years at the School of Interior Architecture at UW Madison, I have observed that the curriculum for interior design students is strong, rigorous and comparable to my own coursework as an architecture student on codes, accessibility, mechanical, plumbing and electrical coordination which are items addressed in the interior design scope of work for AB320.

The Legislation:

Over the past three years we have appreciated fielding questions, as well as working with colleagues on refining this bipartisan legislation. We successfully worked with the ACEC, the American Council of Engineering Companies, moving them from *Opposed* to *Neutral*. We addressed engineers concerns and refined the legislation in early 2020. The AIA was absent from those discussions by their choice, despite being invited. In September 2020, Lisa Kennedy, AIA Exec Director, and myself had an informal discussion to coordinate meeting to review the legislation, unfortunately after multiple exchanges, again nothing was schedule.

A main item of opposition for AIA is including the term architecture and that interior designers cannot 'practice architecture'. Nothing in this bill suggests interior designers will practice Architecture with a Big 'A', they want to practice Interior Design. Yes, there are overlaps between the professions based on education, examination, and experience. This is no different than several professions in the medical field. But interior designers will not and do not want to work in the structural realm, the exterior realm, or the loadbearing realm.



Licensed Architects, like myself, will continue to excel and bring forth their expertise in the interior environment. WRIDs will partner with licensed architects, like myself, for work beyond the scope of interior design as defined in AB 320. I welcome my fellow licensed WI architects and AIA members to join me in support of this sensible and reasonable bill. I support this legislation allowing Registered Interior Designers to be responsible and professionally liable for their own non-structural interior design documents.

Mr. Chairmen and members, thank you for your consideration on this bipartisan legislation. I am available to address any questions you may have.

Thank you.

Melissa Destree, AIA, IIDA, WRID

NCIDQ-CERTIFIED INTERIOR DESIGNERS: HIGHLY QUALIFIED DESIGN PROFESSIONALS

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF INTERIOR DESIGNERS



THE INTERIOR DESIGN PROFESSION:

82%
of firms have four or fewer employees

75%
female practitioners

✗ FALSE STATEMENT: *NCIDQ-certified Interior Designers do not have the education, experience, and testing to provide health, safety, and welfare-related interior design services.*

✓ TRUE STATEMENT: **NCIDQ-Certified Interior Designers (CIDs) undergo formal education, thousands of hours of paid, supervised experience, and an internationally-recognized, eleven-hour certification exam to prepare for protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public in practice. CIDs are eminently qualified to independently design non-loadbearing, non-seismic, and non-structural interior design elements in code-regulated spaces.**

Certified Interior Designers Who Pass the NCIDQ Exam are Prepared to Protect the Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Client and Public in Practice. The National Council for Interior Design Qualification (NCIDQ) certification exam consists of three parts over eleven hours and covers, among other subjects, the seven major aspects of the commercial interior design field:

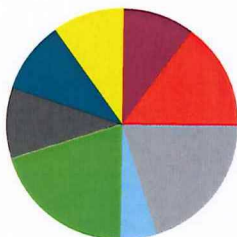
- Building Systems
- Regulation, Building & Safety Codes, & Accessibility Standards
- Contract Documents & Administration
- Construction Standards
- Design Application
- Professionalism in Practice
- Project Coordination

To complete the test, one must finish two multiple choice sections. The third section is a practicum in which the examinee is asked to synthesize and apply a variety of information in order to derive the appropriate design solution.

EXAMINATION

Interior Design Fundamental Exam (IDFX)

125 Questions | 3 Hours to Complete

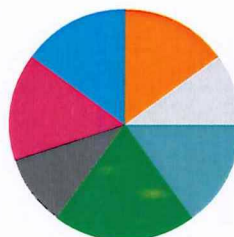


EXAM SUBJECTS:

- Programming and Site Analysis
- Relationship between Human Behavior and the Designed Environment
- Design Communication Techniques
- Life Safety and Universal Design
- Interior Building Materials and Finishes
- Technical Specifications for Furniture, Fixtures, & Equipment and Lighting
- Construction Drawings, Schedules, Specifications
- Professional Development and Ethics

Interior Design Professional Exam (IDPX)

175 Questions | 4 Hours to Complete

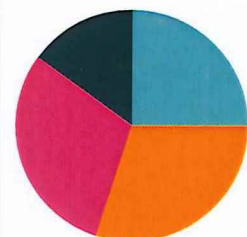


EXAM SUBJECTS:

- Project Assessment and Sustainability
- Project Process, Roles, and Coordination
- Professional Business Practices
- Code Requirements, Laws, Standards, and Regulations
- Integration with Building Systems and Construction
- Integration of Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment
- Contract Administration

Practicum Exam (PRAC 2.0)

120 Questions | 4 Hours to Complete



EXAM SUBJECTS:

- Programming, Planning, and Analysis
- Code Requirements, Laws, Standards, and Regulations
- Integration with Building Systems and Construction
- Contract Documents

Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to present my testimony today in opposition of Assembly Bill 320.

I am Lisa Kennedy, FAIA the Executive Director of AIA Wisconsin. We are the state component of the American Institute of Architects, that represents over 1,500 members of the profession in Wisconsin.

I am a licensed architect and until taking this position last September have spent 35 years as a practicing architect in 19 states. I was also previously licensed as an interior designer in Wisconsin. I owned my own firm back in the 90's before going on to work for former Milwaukee Buck Junior Bridgeman, as Vice-president of Design and Construction for his company that grew from 5 restaurants to over 500 in the United States.

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Institute of Architects

AIA Wisconsin
321 S Hamilton St
Madison, WI 53703

T (608) 257-8477
www.AIAW.org

I also did my tour of duty on the advocacy circuit, serving in all capacities of AIA Wisconsin as well as on the board of the national organization. I am currently on the AIA's national Interior Design task force that is trying to work with the national interior design organizations on this very issue. In addition, I served on the licensing board for architects here in Wisconsin, having been appointed by Governor Thompson in the late 90's.

The history of these two professions trying to come to an agreement on their scope of services goes back to the 1990's nationally, so this is not a new issue or one that is unique to our state. Wisconsin instituted a title registration law for Interior Designers back in 1995. And as you may recall, the practice legislation was introduced last session but died in committee before getting to the Assembly floor.

This time, in the spirit of cooperation, we proposed an amendment to this bill asking the interior design groups to consider removing the phrase "the practice of architecture" from the language. This amendment was refused. Although the group offered a small amount of qualifying language, it could all be moot since the definition of the practice of architecture is clearly defined in the state statutes and many of these proposed exceptions would be in direct conflict with the statutory definition.

Architects do not undervalue the contribution that interior designers make to the built environment. They are a respected partner on projects as are other professionals such as mechanical engineers, electrical engineers, structural engineers, plumbing engineers, lighting designers, acoustical designers, etc. But the typical training and expertise of interior designers fall well short of what is required to practice as an architect, and that is what brings us here

today. As written in AB320, interior designers would be able to practice architecture resulting from the passage of this bill.

Architecture is a generalist position that requires diverse knowledge. Architects are involved in all facets of a building project, and work as the coordinator of all the disciplines required to bring a project to fruition. This as you might imagine this takes a great deal of training and experience. My own path to licensure included completing a Master of Architecture degree, two years of internship working under the direct supervision of a registered architect, the successful passing of the 32-hour Architectural Registration Exam, and submittal of the application and professional references to the State of Wisconsin. Every two years I am required to complete 24 hours of continuing education courses, 16 of which must be specifically on health, safety, and welfare topics.

My experience in restaurant design and construction probably best illustrates the concerns that I have regarding interior designers practicing architecture. In my previous role, I not only served as the architect, interior designer, and construction manager, but also as the owner's representative. I had the duty of not only building the restaurants but also the responsibility of dealing with the properties throughout their lifespan.

Most people think of restaurants as fun little projects when in fact they are one of the most complex and potentially hazardous building types. They can be small in square footage packed tight with mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and fire protection elements, contain a highly hazardous kitchen environment, and accommodate a very dense occupancy load--all critical factors in fire safety. Someone without the knowledge of the systems and variables combined can create an environment that is ripe for catastrophe if fire systems are compromised, means of egress are not calculated correctly, and margins of error for maintenance are not accounted for. The risk in this building type increases dramatically if it is located within a building with other uses such as housing, day cares, and heavy retail uses for example.

My point in this story is that the architect is trained on the totality of the components of a building and is responsible for the coordination of the experts hired in each of these disciplines. Without that basic knowledge of the systems of a building, the safety of its occupants, users, the public and emergency responders is at stake.

We have assembled a package of information which you have in front of you that demonstrates that concern not just from our member architects but from affiliated organizations such as the Alliance for Regulatory Coordination and the Associated General Contractors organization. The AGC is of course the

largest contractor's organization. And the Alliance represents many code and inspection organizations, contractors, subcontractors, firefighters, and fire officials. These groups share our concerns that interior designers are not qualified to practice architecture and as such, oppose this bill.

You will hear testimony from many of our member architects today, each speaking from their individual perspectives. Our organization represents large and small firms, women and minority owned businesses, specialized practices, code specialists, and educators. All have a unique viewpoint but share the same concern. Interior designers are not qualified to practice architecture and this bill should not be passed in its current form. Thank you very much for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa L. Kennedy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "L" and "K".

Lisa L. Kennedy, FAIA
Executive Director

AIA WISCONSIN URGES YOU TO OPPOSE AB 320 AS PROPOSED

WHO WE ARE:

AIA Wisconsin, the state society of the American Institute of Architects, supports state policies that protect the health and safety of the public, encourage sustainable economic development, strengthen the design and construction industry, and improve the quality of life in Wisconsin. With over 1,500 individual members, AIA Wisconsin represents architects in private practice, business, industry, government, and education.

CURRENT STATUTES:

Wis Stats Section 440.96(1) **“Interior design”** means the design of interior spaces in conformity with public health, safety and welfare requirements, including the preparation of documents relating to space planning, finish materials, furnishings, fixtures and equipment and the preparation of documents relating to interior construction that does not substantially affect the mechanical or structural systems of a building. ‘Interior design’ does not include services that constitute the practice of architecture or the practice of professional engineering.”

Wis Stats Section 443.01(5) **“Practice of architecture”** includes any professional service, such as consultation, investigation, evaluation, planning, architectural and structural design, or responsible supervision of construction, in connection with the construction of any private or public buildings, structures, projects, or the equipment thereof, or addition to or alterations thereof, in which the public welfare or the safeguarding of life, health or property is concerned or involved.”

AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER 440, SUBCHAPTER X PROPOSED IN AB 320:

Wis Stats Section 440.96 (1r) (a) **“Interior design”** means the design of interior spaces as a part of an interior alteration or construction project in conformity with public health, safety and welfare requirements, including the preparation of documents relating to building code descriptions, egress plans, space planning, finish materials, furnishings, fixtures, and equipment and the preparation of ~~documents~~ interior technical submissions relating to interior construction that does not ~~substantially~~ affect the mechanical or structural systems of a building.

(b) ‘Interior design’ does not include services any of the following:

1. Services that constitute ~~the practice of architecture or~~ the practice of professional engineering.”

OUR POSITION:

We oppose the bill based on the striking of the phrase **“the practice of architecture.”** As you can see by the statutory definitions above, the practice of architecture is broader than the definition of interior design and by the wording on this bill, it would **expand the definition of interior design to include many of the core services in the practice of architecture.** Although Section 2 and 3 of AB 320 attempt to extract some of the services, the inclusion of the “practice of architecture” language opens the interpretation to a larger scope that interior designers are not trained to provide. Chapter 443 of the state statutes

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AIA Wisconsin
321 S Hamilton St
Madison, WI 53703

T (608) 257-8477
www.AIAW.org

defines architecture, landscape architecture engineering, design, and land surveying in very specific terms and **this bill constitutes a redefinition of rights, responsibilities, liabilities, and relationships in the licensed professions.** This is not an attempt to limit their practice but to clearly define the scope of interior design as it relates to other regulated professions.

OUR RESPONSE:

We proposed an amendment to the interior designer coalition to **remove the phrase “the practice of architecture”** and work with them on language that would define their scope more clearly, but that amendment was rejected. We are open to working with them on other facets of the bill once this language is removed.

OUR CONCERN:

Quite simply, the health, safety, and welfare of the public. Architecture has been a regulated profession in Wisconsin (as well as the other 49 states) for more than a century for good reason. Projects in buildings over 50,000 cubic feet that involve modifications of the scope identified in the building codes should be accomplished utilizing the services of licensed professionals trained to meet the responsibilities in the existing statutes.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS OF NOTE:

- Passage of this bill would lower the standard to practice architecture in the state constituting a risk to the health and safety of the public.
- In Wisconsin, a design professional required on a project can be an architect OR an engineer, yet the practice of engineering is excluded from the practice of interior design per this bill. This is both inconsistent and discriminatory.
- This bill shifts the burden for creating and governing a completely new registration structure to the Department of Safety and Professional Services, and regulatory and budgetary costs to the state have not been defined.
- This bill is not consistent with other states. Only two states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico have interior design practice laws. 28 states in total have some form of regulation, most being title laws like Wisconsin has now.
- In Wisconsin there is no degree requirement that would prevent an interior designer from becoming a licensed architect if they wanted to practice architecture. They need only to pass the examination, demonstrate the experience, and provide adequate references.
- This bill raises the requirements for entry into the interior design profession, making the profession less accessible to those pursuing a career in interior design.
- In Wisconsin, an architect or engineer is NOT required for projects in buildings under the 50,000 cubic feet threshold, representing no additional burden of cost on interior design projects.

For further information, please contact:
Lisa L. Kennedy, FAIA, Executive Director
lisa@aiaw.org
(608) 310-3984 office
(414) 517-7277 cell



Chris Rute, AIA RIBA

414.306.5916

chris.rute@CRDesignMKE.com

1006 E. State Street, Suite 47, Milwaukee, WI 53202

CREATIVE SOLUTION SYNTHESIS



18 May 2021

To: Assembly Committee on Regulatory Licensing Reform

RE: Assembly Bill 320

Dear Committee members:

Thank you, committee chair and committee members, for your time this morning.

My name is Chris Rute. I am an Architect, licensed to practice in Wisconsin, and a member of the International Code Council. My architectural career now spans 40 years of which I enjoyed 24 years as a code official with the City of Milwaukee. During that time, I worked closely with my colleagues at the Department of Safety and Professional Services viscerally involved with the administration and interpretation of the building code. I served on both the Wisconsin Commercial Code Council and the Existing Building Code Council involved with the adoption of the model codes and the tailoring of them to meet the unique needs of the Wisconsin statutory requirements. In the last 3 years I have returned to the private sector providing peer plan review and building code consultation to design professionals. Over the years I have been called upon to provide building code tutorials and training to design professionals, code officials, and students of UWM School of Architecture, Milwaukee School of Engineering, Milwaukee Area Technical College, and Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design-Interior Architecture Design Studio.

The month of May is designated nationally as Building Safety Month, so it is timely that we are having this discussion.

The building code is a dynamic, complex, and important document designed to protect the health, safety, and welfare of occupants of Wisconsin's buildings.

First and foremost, the code requirements are intended to minimize the likelihood of a situation that would endanger those occupants.

Second, in the event one would occur, the provisions of the code will enable the occupants to escape the danger and protect the first responders sent to address the situation.

A thorough, working knowledge of the building code is one of the primary charges of the registered architect.

A thorough, working knowledge of the building code is obtained, verified, and maintained through the education, experience, examination, and then, continuous education required for one to be able to claim the title of architect and to engage in the practice of architecture.

Even a minor alteration in a building has potential life safety implications:

- A simple modification of a partition wall could compromise its passive fire resistance capabilities allowing rapid spread of fire to other areas of the building endangering those inside.
- A minimal rearrangement of office spaces could render a fire suppression system ineffective preventing its ability to extinguish a smoldering fire as intended not only placing the occupants in harms way but also endangering the first responders.
- A simple change to room configuration can impact means of egress width, clarity, and efficacy which might hinder, delay, or stymie the ability of occupants to evacuate a building in an emergency situation of any kind in a timely manner and could prevent their ability to evacuate at all.
- A relocation of doors and other elements could easily render a portion of a building inaccessible to those who are alternately abled impacting equity and welfare.
- A change in the use of a building could increase the hazard to the building or be a more hazardous occupancy for which the building is inadequately designed.

These are but a few examples of relatively minor changes in an existing building that could have severe deleterious implications to buildings and their occupants if the health, safety, and welfare requirements of the building code are not fully understood and correctly applied.

The bill before you lacks the rigorous requirements that architects must achieve that provide certainty that a thorough, working knowledge of the building code will be assured. Passing this bill will place the lives and wellbeing of the people who live, work, and play in Wisconsin at potential risk.

For this reason, I urge you to vote against bill AB320. Thank you for your time today.

Sincerely,



Chris Rute, AIA RIBA

www.CRDesignMKE.com



Kahler Slater

Milwaukee
Madison
Richmond
Chicago
Singapore

May 18, 2021

111 West Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53203
P 414.272.2000

Assembly Committee on Regulatory Licensure Reform
State of Wisconsin

Committee Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for your invitation and openness to receiving my testimony on this matter.

I am writing in opposition to **AB 320** and ask that you reject it in its current form.

Interior Designers and Architects have a shared passion for improving the built environment, and we collaborate every day to achieve that outcome, but that does not mean that we have the same training and experiences to do so. Line 11 of AB 320, as currently written, calls for striking thru the exclusion of “the practice of architecture” from that of interior design. The striking of those few words would directly weaken existing health, safety and welfare (HSW) administrative code protections, because registered interior designers are held to much less rigorous standards for training, examination and continuing education than are licensed architects.

My point of view on this is informed by my 35 years in practice, including over 20 years as the HR Director and one of 40 owners of our 115-person architecture and interior design firm. Please know that **8%** of our staff are interior designers. I will also note that **10%** of our owners are interior designers. During my tenure, I’ve reviewed 6,000 resumes and have hired almost 400 architects *and* interior designers. Although our professions share passions, our respective experiences and training are very different in focus. Take stairs, as but *one* example. I can’t recall ever interviewing an interior designer who has spent countless hours on the technical design of stairs, unlike most every aspiring architect has done. Stairs are a non-structural interior building component, yet they are one of the most complex design assignments on every multi-story building project. Stairs are a nexus of multiple sections of the code, and are critical to the daily function of buildings, while literally saving lives during emergencies.

Stairs are one component. For a whole-building example, I ask you to consider the building in which we are meeting, the Wisconsin State Capitol. Our firm had the great honor of leading this

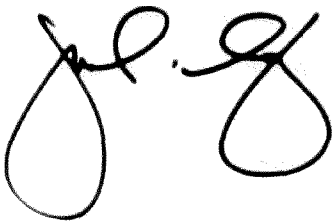
incredibly complex, 12-year restoration and remodeling of our State's most important building. Although this was an "interior" building project, we led a project design team consisting of a multitude of architects, engineers, interior designers, historic preservationists, artisans, and many, many other consultants. To be sure, the vast majority of our work was not structural, but almost every decision had an implication on the ever-present protection of your health, safety and welfare, and that of the public, through very complex analysis and balancing of often competing aspects of the code, space utilization needs, security requirements and engineering systems, all while keeping the project on time and on budget. These are the kinds of project complexities that architects, not interior designers, are trained to address.

Lastly, I encourage you to consider the perspective of Andrea Day in our firm. Andrea is a very experienced interior designer who became a licensed architect last year. Although Andrea couldn't be here today, she has submitted her written testimony in opposition to AB 320 for your consideration.

Thank you for your time and attention today. I wish you well in your deliberations, while urging you to reject this bill as written.

Sincerely,

KAHLER SLATER, INC.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John G. Horky". The signature is stylized with large loops and a prominent initial "J".

John G. Horky, FAIA
Principal / HR Director

Home Address

2551 N. 84th Street
Wauwatosa, WI 53226



Alliance for Regulatory Coordination

REVISED

May 17, 2021

Senator Stroebel, Chair
Committee on Government Operations,
Legal Review and Consumer Protection
Sen.Stroebel@legis.wisconsin.gov
Mark.Radcliffe@legis.wisconsin.gov

Representative Sortwell, Chair
Committee on Regulatory Licensing Reform
Rep.Sortwell@legis.wisconsin.gov
Zach.Pfaffenbach@legis.wisconsin.gov

Dear Senator Stroebel and Representative Sortwell:

Members of the Alliance for Regulatory Coordination, as listed below, are opposed to 2021 Assembly Bill 320 and Senate Bill 344. We believe these bills will inadvertently place building occupants and first responders at greater risk to their health, safety and welfare due to the proposed allowance of interior designers engaging in important aspects of the practice architecture in Wisconsin.

These bills blur - and sometimes eliminate - the line between the practice of architecture and the practice of interior design. It is not clear to us how the interior design profession is equipped to deal with the design, or redesign, of architectural elements, such as interior partition walls, where egress paths, sprinkler coverage, electrical wiring, plumbing piping, or alarm devices might be involved.

We note that these bills contain a carve out for the practice of engineering, but do not contain a similar carve out for the practice of architecture. To improve these bills before they are advanced, we encourage additional dialogue between the interior design community, and architects, builders, fire officials, inspectors, and others involved in building design, construction and regulatory services, in an effort to delineate the line between the practice of architecture and the practice of interior design.

Sincerely,

Robert G. DuPont, Founder
Alliance for Regulatory Coordination
robertgdupont@gmail.com

The Alliance for Regulatory Coordination, is a consortium of organizations involved in building design, construction and regulatory services throughout Wisconsin.



Alliance for Regulatory Coordination

Classic Members

International Association of Electrical Inspectors, Wisconsin Chapter

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Wis. State Conf.

National Electrical Contractors Association, Wisconsin Chapter

Northwest Wisconsin Building Inspectors Association

Plumbers Union Local 75

Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors, Wisconsin Association

Sheet Metal Air Rail Transportation Local 18

Water Quality Association of Wisconsin

Wisconsin Code Officials Alliance

Wisconsin Electrical Trades Council

Wisconsin Fire Protection Coalition

Wisconsin Propane Gas Association

Wisconsin State Fire Chief's Association

Wisconsin State Fire Inspectors Association

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Madison Area Mechanical and Sheet Metal Contractors Association

Madison Association of Plumbing Contractors

Professional Fire Fighters of Wisconsin

Southwestern Wisconsin Building Inspectors Association

Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association

Wisconsin State Firefighters Association

Committee Chair and Committee Members,

Thank you for allowing me to testify in opposition to AB 320 today.

My name is Robert Wheat, and I am an architect licensed in the state of Wisconsin for over 20 years. I am also licensed to practice architecture in Iowa, Illinois, and Missouri. Additionally, I am the current secretary-treasurer of the Wisconsin Chapter of the American Institute of Architect (AIA Wisconsin) which is a voluntary and elected role. Our organization is composed of over 1,500 members throughout the state working in private practice, business, industry, government, and education.

Prior to my current employment, I spent over 10 years as a principal of my own small firm in Monroe, Wisconsin as both a sole practitioner and in partnership with a handful of employees, but for the past 7 years I have been a Project Architect and Project Manager with OPN Architects. OPN is a generalist firm of currently 103 design professionals across 4 offices. 43 of those design professionals are female, including 2 of the 9 principals, and 3 of the 6 associates in firm leadership. When I say design professionals, I am referring not just to Architects and those educated and training to one day become an Architect, but I am also referring to a group of some of the finest interior designers with whom I have had the pleasure to work in my 20+ year career. Our practice runs the gamut from small tenant improvement projects in existing buildings for various developers, property owners and tenants, to larger public and private sector clients, plus municipalities of all sizes.

I provide this background to make clear my experience and qualifications as well as my respect and camaraderie with those in the interior design profession. But I am also here today in opposition to AB 320 and I hope draw your attention to aspects of this proposed legislation that is very concerning not just to the profession of architecture, but also to public safety.

Personally, and as a profession, I have no issue with the licensure of interior designers. My issue with the bill is simple: as written, the definition of the scope of interior design would include the practice of architecture. Becoming a licensed architect requires much more rigorous training and a diversity of experience culminating with approved testing to demonstrate and ensure an individuals' minimum core competencies with respect to the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

Largely this training is the years of experience looking at projects in their totality and not just being focused on the areas of individual or personal interest. This is wholistic training which is defined, and which prepares one to practice architecture.

There is most definitely a venn diagram of interior design and architecture, but it is not a single circle. There is a large region beyond the overlap that falls under the description and scope that is the “**practice of architecture**”. In addition to looking at projects wholistically, another consideration is the practice of architecture is not a solitary act. It frequently involves a team of design professionals and the Architect is the one with the diversity of training necessary to coordinate and lead the multiple engineering disciplines, the interior designers, and other specialists. The practice of architecture is being liable not just to the other design professionals on the team, but to the owner and public in general.

I know of several Architects who are members of AIA Wisconsin, some may even be here today to testify against AB 320, who started their careers as or on the path to be an interior designer but have gone on to become licensed Architects in lieu of or in addition to being a licensed interior designer. No matter the path, and there are multiple paths to being a licensed Architect in the state of Wisconsin, these individuals took the steps necessary under current state statutes to demonstrate their technical knowledge and expertise before assuming the responsibility to practice architecture. This opportunity is available to all interior designers in Wisconsin now and without complicating the existing statute language.

The removal of those 3 words, the “practice of architecture”, which exist in the current statutory definition of interior design with respect to what interior design does not entail, will result in a blurring of the line between the practice of architecture and interior design.

I welcome the opportunity to address any question you may have for me and to discuss this proposed legislation further.

Thank you for your time and consideration and please vote “No” on AB 320.

Sincerely,

Robert Wheat, AIA

Proposed bill LRB-0245 is a next generation of SB303 from last session. This bill passed the Senate with the support of Sen. Erpenbach (which I found personally disappointing). For this reason I will articulate my concerns with you in greater detail.

I am a registered architect and have practiced in Wisconsin for over 20 years, the last 15 years of which have been with Flad Architects**. Flad is a Madison, Wisconsin-based national thought and design leader in service of health care, research and development and higher education clients. Flad has offices throughout the country and employs architects, planners, interior designers, landscape architects, structural engineers and other specialists.

The proposed bill LRB-0245 as written, (now by omission) defines the scope of interior design to include the practice of architecture. With no specific requirements for training or testing the knowledge of interior designers, the legislation as proposed specifically allows interior design professionals to lead tasks "*including the preparation of documents relating to building code descriptions, egress plans*" ...and presumably the myriad of research, planning, multi-disciplinary coordination and regulatory requirements that go with that task. This is irresponsible. I don't know an interior designer who is either qualified to lead that effort nor would be so irresponsible to actually sign and seal such documents. This is not a disparagement of that field but a statement of objective fact. I am fortunate to work with some of the most knowledgeable and talented interior designers in the country. Designers that take on a more complex, vital and demanding role in their field than most of their peers due to the very challenging project types Flad practices in. In addition, several interior designers at Flad are also highly valued business leaders.

However, becoming a licensed architect requires much more rigorous education, years of internship, numerous nationally accredited exams and ultimately experience accrued over decades. Anecdotally, I've yet to meet or train an architect that felt confident handling all the tasks associated with our profession immediately upon fulfilling all the requirements for licensure. This being after at least five years of formal education and usually that many more years of focused internship all followed by rigorous national board testing.

The practice of architecture encompasses a host of diverse areas of knowledge not least of which is the health, safety, and welfare of the public as mentioned above. The practice of architecture also requires the technical knowledge and credibility to lead a diverse team of engineers, specialty consultants and construction professionals through the design and construction process. Architects are also responsible for advising an Owner throughout the very complex and financially risky process of design and construction. Through this process, architects also understand and accept the legal exposure necessary to accomplish the completion of a construction project. Only being trained within a specialized area of the building design practice, interior designers simply lack the background necessary to lead these efforts. Nor do I believe this legislation would afford interior designers the credibility most clients, insurers or attorneys would require to operate in this capacity.

The ability to practice architecture in the state of Wisconsin (and nationally) is already regulated at the national level. By circumventing the requirements to practice architecture in Wisconsin, LRB-0245 weakens the profession to being virtually meaningless in our great state. This is potentially damaging to the credibility of a firm like Flad Architects, the only Wisconsin-based national design practice competing at the highest levels with other national design firms.

I hope you can appreciate my concern with what I view as an arbitrary, irresponsible and ill-informed piece of legislation that not only affects me and my peers but may be damaging to the firm I work for; a firm with a long history of innovation and, I would hope, an important place in Wisconsin.

By necessity, I am a professional who must deal in objective issues. I do not understand the problem LRB-0245 is trying to solve. Nor did Sen. Erpenbach articulate what was being achieved by this legislation other than to state his support for the bill. A failure that was upsetting to a supporter and constituent that will be directly affected by this bill. If you do ultimately choose to support LRB-0245 in its current form, I would appreciate a more thoughtful explanation to help me understand what is in fact being accomplished with the bill. I apologise if this sounds presumptuous or disrespectful. However, I can only understand LRB-0245 to undermine the profession I've dedicated myself to, so I feel it is fair to ask this of my Representative.

I know the AIA has offered an amendment to rectify the legislation proposed in LRB-0245. I implore you thoughtfully consider it.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Mitchell Fox, AIA

2021

Thank you for your time. I oppose this bill, bill AB320. I specifically oppose the elimination of the words 'practice of architecture'.

My name is Melinda Pogwizd. I am a female registered Architect in the state of Wisconsin and have 10 years of experience. I work for Kahler Slater, an international architecture, interior design, environmental branding and strategic advisory firm.

I am a mother of 3 children, 6, 4 and 2 years old. I took 5 of my 6 Architect Registration Exams while pregnant with my third child, working full time, renovating my home and serving on a Board. Despite my hectic life, I became a licensed Architect the day I reached 36 weeks pregnant with my third child.

I serve as the NCARB Licensing Advisor for Kahler Slater. This means I advise our firm's aspiring Architects through their path to licensure, including 3,740 experience hours in different aspects of the field and 6 licensing exams. I have personally advised a woman in our Madison office who started her education and career as an Interior Designer. As she gravitated towards more medical planning roles on projects, she chose to pursue her Architect license. A little over a year later she was done with her experience hours, passed all 6 exams and became a licensed Architect in the State of Wisconsin. There are several other examples of those people in my own firm who have a similar story. I sit next to a Fine Arts major, another great example of someone who pivoted his career to be an Architect, met the qualifications and got licensed.

Architects have the responsibility to uphold a standard to protect the health, safety and welfare of those who encounter and occupy the buildings we design. We interpret building codes, fire safety codes, seismic requirements, facility guidelines, city and zoning requirements, etc, all so that buildings stay standing and people stay healthy and most importantly, alive.

Along with being a licensing advisor, I also hold leadership in my firm as an Associate on the healthcare team. Additionally, I am the Justice Equity Diversity and Inclusion Chair for Women in Healthcare, on the DEI Task Force for the American College of Healthcare Executives, founder of Women in Design-Madison and served on the AIA Strategic Counsel as the Associate Representative. Empowering women in Architecture, allied design professions, STEM related fields and women in leadership, is something that I spend every spare moment fighting for.

Although becoming an Architect is a journey of intelligence, perseverance and decision making, it is not intangible. I am the woman, the mother of 3 young children, that you have been led to believe is unable to be an Architect because of my gender. Women should lean in and get licensed, change the numbers and represent. Eliminating the credentials and qualifications is not the path to a more equitable profession.

My name is Alan L. Evinrude and I'm writing in opposition to AB320.

I am an architect, licensed in Wisconsin since 1975 and am currently retired. For the last 18 years of my career I headed the Construction Services Department of Milwaukee Area Technical College. During that tenure I was responsible for leading facilities planning and development for the District until my retirement in August of 2012. During those years we hired many architectural firms and worked with many interior design firms to accomplish our assignments and complete our projects. Many of the architectural firms we commissioned used interior design firms for targeted lesser parts of their work, but never for an entire architectural endeavor, or anything close to it. At times we commissioned interior design firms directly for the traditional limited scope work within their discipline, but that was rightly the extent of their engagements. They were all talented highly professional people, but by no means trained or experienced anywhere nearly sufficient to offer the full range of architectural services. For that reason I must voice my strong opposition to AB320. Passing the proposed legislation could very well put the health, safety and welfare of the public at risk.

Feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,
Alan L. Evinrude
Director, Construction Services Department (Retired)
Milwaukee Area Technical College
Wisconsin Arch License A-3874
AIA #30101839
N76 W15781 Countryside Drive
Menomonee Falls WI 53051
414.418.4616

My name is Paul Grzeszczak, a licensed architect in the state of Wisconsin for 25 years. I am offering my testimony in OPPOSITION to AB320. I graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee School of Architecture and Urban Planning with an undergraduate degree in 1989 and a Masters degree in 1991, and am a lifelong Wisconsin resident. My first few years of work in the profession included very directed internship hours under the mentorship of highly qualified and experienced architects, after which I was able to sit for and pass a series of exams to obtain my Architectural License. This was an arduous process that to this day I am very proud of. Knowing the depth and breadth of knowledge needed to practice as a Licensed Architect is why I offer this testimony today.

The messages that the supporters of this Bill offer is that the education, types of on-the-job experience, and examination requirements of both architects and interior designers are similar enough, to the extent that the proposed Bill AB320 strikes "the practice of architecture" from the current EXCLUSIONS found in the definition of "Interior Design" found in State Statute 440.96(1). Though I have worked with incredibly talented interior designers over the years, I would say our skills complement each other, rather than saying they are equivalent. Removal of "the practice of architecture" from the EXCLUSIONS in the currently proposed AB320 attempts to make them equivalent professions in broadly defined areas. Removal of "the practice of architecture" EXCLUSION blurs the scope of services of the two professions rather than clarifying them. So much of what we do as architects is focused on the health, safety, and welfare of the Wisconsin citizens which use and occupy our built work; those responsibilities are ones we take seriously, and blurring those lines could be of great risk to the public. Maintaining the current definitions of "Interior design" in Wisconsin Statute 440.96(1) and the "Practice of Architecture" in Wisconsin Statute 443.01(5) creates certainty for the public, rather than confusion.

I am not against the concept of the licensure of interior designers, as I certainly encourage all of those in the design professions to espouse to a level of greater education, experience, and responsibility. Legislation that has a benefit, providing value and clarity for the public, is useful. But AB320 instead creates a myriad of new confusing areas, and requires additional State resources to develop a statutory framework for obtaining and maintaining a license (such as creating testing procedures, an examining board, a regulatory board, and continuing education standards), and a set of practice procedures, such as a new set of plan review standards that DSPS reviewers would need to create for the review of submissions made by only by interior designers. For Architects, Engineers, there are comprehensive State Statutes and definitions and procedures that work well, in their current form. With AB320, as written, the definition of the scope of interior design attempts to include some of the practice of architecture. But being held legally responsible for "some" loosely defined parts of "the practice of architecture" is not in the best interest of the public at large.

Wisconsin currently has interior design TITLE law, but only a handful of states have interior design PRACTICE law, and that is what this Bill proposes. Of those few states with interior design practice laws, none have an open-ended removal of "the practice of architecture" from their EXCLUSIONS. The removal of that EXCLUSION is dangerous. My concern is that the health, safety, and welfare of the public would be compromised with the passage of this legislation by removing the EXCLUSION of "the practice of architecture" in this Bill. I would encourage the Committee to vote "no" on AB320 in its currently proposed form, and consider an amendment to return the EXCLUSION of "the practice of architecture", as found in the current State Statutes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



May 17, 2021

Re: Testimony in opposition to AB320

My name is Suzie Van Cleave and I am a female architect and have been practicing for 20 years. I have run my own architectural firm since 2006 with my office currently in Shorewood. I oppose AB320, essentially the statement that allows Interior Designers to include "the practice of architecture".

I came to this profession in a rather unique way as I first practiced Interior Design after receiving a 4-yr degree in the field. I worked at a Commercial Design firm side by side with Architects designing commercial interiors. After several years of this, I wanted to broaden my scope and work in the more technical field of architecture where I could have more influence and oversight for an entire project rather than work in one discipline. At that time, I was in Texas, a state well-known for its deregulation efforts, however, the process to become an Architect was still very tedious, even after all my experience as an Interior Designer. I was required to return to school and obtain a Professional degree in Architecture which was a 3-year full-time program resulting in a Master of Architecture. Then there was 3 years of work experience in the field before taking the national exam. It was only after this long process that I felt qualified to practice architecture and comfortable signing drawings.

In Wisconsin, if an Interior Designer wants to practice Architecture, it is the easiest state to become licensed. It requires 7 years of experience in the architectural field and then pass the national exam. From a different perspective, many Interior Designers do not realize that they are already qualified in Wisconsin to design any single or two-family residential property and any building under 50,000 cu ft. To put it in better terms, that is a 2-story building measuring 50' x 50'. A licensed architect is NOT required for these building types.

I am going to conclude with an example of the scope of an Architect's services on a project I am working on. My client is a Pentecostal church, and they have an existing building where they hold their worship services. The pastor wants to add a daycare facility within the church building and you would think it would be a fairly easy process.... there are already classrooms, bathrooms, and a kitchen, however, it is very complicated. First, I must evaluate the entire building to determine the type of construction that exists. This information will determine the number of occupants allowed in the spaces and whether fire protection systems will be required and where. Since the use of the space will be changing from a church facility to a combined church/daycare, I must do a Change of Use Analysis, required by the City of Milwaukee, to see if it is even feasible. To do this, I must work through the IEBC (International Existing Building Code) to determine if I am moving into a more hazardous use which we are. The use is now determined to be an Institutional space. Now, I must work through the IBC (International Building Code) to determine the elevated fire resistance, if sprinklers are required, does the daycare need to be separated from the worship space with a fire barrier, and where new exits are required. This process still does not include the requirements from the State of Wisconsin for Licensed Daycare centers. This all occurs before any drawings have been done and doesn't include the technical systems, construction plans, methods or details that will follow.

I hope this information explains my opposition to AB320, specifically the statement that allows Interior Designers to include "the practice of architecture" as one of their services. Thank you for your time.

2021 ASSEMBLY BILL AB320

May 17, 2021

Dear Committee Chair and Committee Members,

The definition of a Citizen Architect is to practice architecture by using ones insights, talents, training and experience to contribute meaningfully to the improvement of the community and human condition. I am a licensed and registered architect in Wisconsin and have been practicing architecture in New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and here in the mid-west for the past 25 years. During this time, I have worked on a large variety of projects of all sizes and types, with multi-disciplinary teams, including many interior designers that have produced fantastic work. In my professional career I have seen however, how even experienced interior designers struggle with and do not exhibit a full understanding of the holistic practice of architecture, including code compliance, construction methods, engineering technologies, and architectural principles.

For this reason, I strongly oppose LRB-0245 Assembly Bill AB320.

I do not question the licensure of interior designers. My fundamental concern with this bill AB 320 is that it will allow interior designers to 'practice architecture' (AB 320, Section 1. 440.96 (1r) (b) 1. Services that constitute ~~the practice of architecture or~~ the practice of professional engineering). In my mind, this is a dangerous path to take as it may greatly affect and compromise the health, safety, and welfare of the public. This is due to the interior designer's lack of required rigorous and continuous extensive training, knowledge and understanding of the current codes and standards that an architect in comparison has to go through from the onset of their education and on a yearly basis thereafter for the rest of their careers. Until that level of initial and continued education is matched, the profession of an architect has to be upheld.

As an architect and as a member of AIA-Wisconsin I OPPOSE this legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Evelyn Freimann
License No. 12997-5
401 S Prairie St
Stoughton, WI 53589

Thank you committee chair and committee members for your time this morning.

My name is Wekeana Lassiter. I am an Architectural Associate working at a firm in Madison and an adjunct professor at the School of Architecture and Urban Planning at UW-Milwaukee. I am also serving as the Vice President of the Wisconsin Chapter of the National Organization of Minority Architects. I have an undergraduate degree in Architecture and a Master's Degree in Interior Design and am in the process of completing the Architecture Registration Exams to become a licensed Architect in the State of Wisconsin. I am coming before you today in opposition to bill AB320 and specifically opposed to striking the language "the practice of architecture" because *the practice of architecture* is the forest for the trees.

There were many things in my design education that I learned, but there was one word and its meaning that still sticks with me to this day: *gesamtkunstwerk*. This is a German word that means "total work of art". This was the idea that shaped my understanding of Architecture to be complete; which meant I, as the designer, had to maintain the totality of intent and execution of the design throughout the project. This thinking led me to understand that Architecture is not just a set of requirements smashed inside of a shell. *The practice of Architecture* is a complex machine, with many aspects that make it up. Each aspect is as important as the next because they all work together to create a space that is appropriate for its intended use.

On my journey to understanding the totality of architecture, I studied Interior Design as a Masters Student. This education gave me an in depth understanding of the human experience in space design and how space design shapes that experience, from spatial adjacencies like having your kitchen next to your garage to easier unload groceries; all the way to the affect of furniture and finishes on, not only the practical use of space, but also the affect such elements can have on comfort, use and performance. After completing my education and working professionally, I discovered that in order to reach my goal of understanding the totality of architecture, I needed to become licensed. So I completed my AXP hours and as mentioned in the beginning of our conversation am actively testing to earn my Architectural license.

From my education and experience, Interior Designers are trained to look at the interior environment and intimately understand how humans experience the space. Architects are trained to look at the totality of the design. To understand that any decision, no matter how seemingly small, has a ricocheting impact on other various elements of the design. This total view point is imperative to upholding our duty as Architects which is to protect the life, safety and welfare of the communities that we serve.

I urge you to vote against bill AB320. Thank you for your time today.

May 17, 2021

Thank you to the Committee Chair for having this hearing and reading my testimony. Unfortunately, I will not be able to appear in person but I authorize Lisa Kennedy, Executive Director of AIA Wisconsin to register my voice in opposition of bill AB 320.

My name is Ursula Twombly, and I am here to testify in Opposition to AB 320. I am a licensed, female architect who had practiced architecture in Wisconsin for over 40 years. 25 years ago, I co-founded a woman-owned firm, Continuum Architects + Planners, S.C. in Milwaukee. Our practice focused on Higher Education, Corporate Offices, Municipal and Federal work. Our firm held multi-million-dollar contracts for new construction as well as a small \$1,000 fees for smaller office renovations.

Throughout my career as a female architect and a past owner of a woman business, I have fully and actively supported other woman-owned businesses and professionals. I have partnered with interior designers and *highly respect* their important role and contributions in the making of buildings and spaces.

However, I oppose AB 320 as written and introduced because it is too open ended, allowing interior designers to practice architecture without demonstrating their preparation to do so.

I believe Interior Designers have the passion and the intellect to become proficient to

- uphold all the Health, Safety and Welfare codes
- understand occupancy and fire separations
- coordinate the work of mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and acoustical engineers
- ensure the safety and wellbeing of the users
- assume professional liability for their work
-

But they have to do the hard work, and invest the time to prove it, just like architects have to do.

If Interior Design Professionals want to stamp and seal non-structural, non-engineering construction documents the public must demand that Interior Designer have the expertise to protect the welfare of the public. I support granting Licensed Interior Designers the right to stamp and seal construction drawings for interior, non-structural, non-engineering **work if and only if they meet an equivalent licensing and continued education requirement as architects and be held to the same or equivalent State Statutes and Administrative Codes as Architects.**

Again, I oppose this bill as written, because it is a blank check allowing interior designers to practice architecture, but I encourage the Wisconsin chapters of AIA and IIDA to continue discussions to reach a compromise that would be in line with other States and protect the Public.

Sincerely



Ursula Twombly, FAIA Member Emeritus
11716 West Meinecke Ave
Wauwatosa, WI 53226
414-303-4423

I am a sole practitioner offering architectural design services. Most of my practice involves affordable housing, especially in small Wisconsin communities where the rent-assisted housing is in need of rehabilitation and updating. When the projects require more than my individual efforts I collaborate with other firms of architects and interior designers.

Some of my projects include nine municipal and one tribal housing authorities' revitalization & re-use most utilizing Section 42 tax credit financing: City of Washburn, Bayfield County, Brillion, Trempealeau County, the Red Cliff Band of the Lake Superior Chippewa, Beloit CDA, Dodge County, and Stoughton. Construction was completed in 2013 on five townhomes in La Farge, and in 2015 on rehabilitation of Barrier-Free units at Genesis Housing in Oregon, Wisconsin. In 2016, new construction of 24 units of supported housing in three buildings for the Red Cliff Band was completed. In 2018 I started a multi-year program of rehabilitation of 64 units for the Stoughton Housing Authority. This month we concluded the Boscobel Housing Authority's rehab of a 24-unit building.

The Interior Designers' messaging goes something like this:

1. Interior Designers have the same education, experience, and examination requirements. Therefore, they should be allowed to practice architecture.
2. 17-27 states have interior design laws. Wisconsin needs to get with the times and conform to this industry standard.
3. Let's avoid this "pesky procedural step" of having an architect "approve" our documents to save time and money.
4. This is nothing more than a turf war between architects and interior designers. This is "the man," i.e.-white, male architects, trying to keep small, women-owned businesses down.

None of this could be further from the truth!

1. Architects and interior designers do not have the same education, experience, and examination requirements. Interior designers are not be allowed to practice architecture in the 49 states that regulate the practice of architecture, including Wisconsin. That is the industry standard.
2. Sure, 20 something states have interior design laws. These are "title laws," and Wisconsin is one of them. They grant interior designers who have met their profession's education, experience, and examination requirements the ability to distinguish themselves as Wisconsin Registered Interior Designers. Only a handful of states have "practice laws" which allow interior designers to practice interior

design, not architecture, and submit documents for permitting purposes. This privilege is a rare anomaly and not industry standard, and it comes with numerous safeguards to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

3. Architects do not “approve” interior designer’s documents; only the Department of Safety and Professional Services and certain delegated municipalities have the authority to conditionally approve construction documents. The reason why it costs money is because in order to sign, seal, or stamp any plans, they must be prepared under an architect’s “personal direction and control.” This takes time for a thorough, extensive review to see how the project affects the entire building, and, in doing so, the architect takes all the responsibility and liability for the project for 10 years. This kind of responsible supervision is normal for architects and serves to protect the public’s health and safety in use of the buildings..

4. This is not a simple turf war between architects and interior designers, as evidenced by the variety of other organizations that showed up today to register in opposition to this bill. This is about protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public. You will see the diverse face of architecture in the other speakers today, small, women-owned businesses like my own. In fact, according to the AIA's 2020 Firm Survey Report, over 75% of architectural firms have nine or fewer employees. According to other AIA estimates, nearly 92% of architectural firms fall under the U.S. Small Business Administration’s definition of a small business.

My strong and specific objections to the language of bill.: if interior designers want to be licensed design professionals with permitting privileges, like architects and engineers, then in order to protect public health & safety it’s imperative that they abide by the same state statutes and administrative code requirements as architects and engineers.

I ask that you vote “no” on this bill in its present form. Striking the language in Section allowing interior designers to practice architecture would assure the continued protection of public health & safety and would make the bill acceptable to me.

Thank you for your consideration of my views.

Thomas Hirsch, FAIA

Oppose Assembly Bill 320: Team Leader Issues Proposed Amendment to Statute 440.96 (1) Interior Design

Introduction and Quals

Thank you for allowing me to testify on behalf of the architects of our community opposing the changes to the statute defining the scope of the practice of Interior Design.

I am Kathryn Tyson, a retired **woman architect** registered since 1977. I have a Masters in Architecture and an MBA which have supported my specialty in laboratory **project management** as well as programming and planning.

I have worked for organizations with clients all over the world primarily in the pharmaceutical, petrochemical, university, federal and state worlds. The Wisconsin component of my career has included such things as 17 great years with Flad Architects, and the lab planning for UW Energy Institute and UW Meat Sciences Lab.

Issue: Ability to Coordinate Professionals Over Full Process

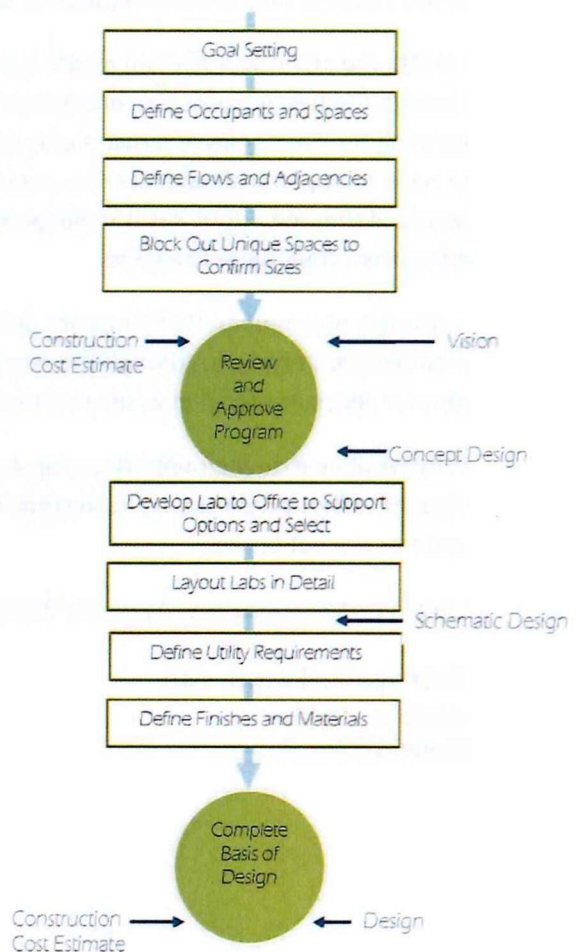
The concept of turning one of the other Team Members (Interior Designers) into the Team Leader of a building design process is problematic to me. The architect is **educated, trained, and licensed** not only in a single subset of activities, but in how to orchestrate the full team of professionals.

First, **who is this team?** This includes disciplines of Engineering: Structural, Mechanical, Plumbing, Electrical and IT, as well as Interior Design. The Architect will also need to reference and comply with requirements of the Civil Engineer and Site Landscaper, even on interior projects.

Second, **what is the role of the Architect?** The **Architect as Planner/Designer** needs to be able to lead the client's decision makers through the decisions related to budget, schedule, definition of groups involved. The architect then needs to lead the various managers of groups involved through who and what is needed to be included, how it will change over time, what the process flows or adjacency requirements will be and to summarize all of this through space diagrams and summaries of people and space, adding the interpretation of cost.

Critically, Architects need to understand and respond to the

Basis of Design Process



building codes and requirements for the interior such as **fire safety exiting** (length, fire ratings, sprinklering, dead ends, etc.).

The **Architect as Team Leader** also needs to **know enough about each of the team member disciplines** to be able to represent the building overall in the process of design until specifics are needed and the team members are asked for their design involvement. When the concept design is done, the client's decision makers have agreed upon the concept approach that they want to take and what cost they can agree to. As part of this Concept Design, Architects need to **facilitate the engineers' and interior designer's ability to provide economic, effective distribution solutions.**

Third, **what is the role of the Interior Designer** prior to these proposed changes? Interior Design involves an important role of selection of finishes and materials and occurs usually at the end of Schematic Design phase, during Design Development and Construction Documents phases after many of the costly decisions are made. It impacts very little of the sizing, layout and flow of the building as a system.

The current **Interior Designer is not usually involved in any of this front-end client decision making and multi-discipline coordination planning** on larger projects unless they are asked to address unique issues because they are not required to be trained or experienced in these other processes.

Fourth, the architectural team leader learns through formal, accredited education or more likely through the training process, internships that are required for architectural licensure to spend time learning the basic roles and issues of team members in each of the steps of the process, so that they can bring in the right professional when needed to help scope out and define the program. **None of this legal redefinition addresses nor will provide the requirement for Interior Designers to get that education, training or licensure.**

I strongly recommend that if interior designers want the job of an Architect, they should get an architecture degree, go through the required training, get licensed and then go into their selected Interior specialization, but as an architect.

Why would we downgrade Wisconsin architectural legal structure by allowing interior designers to sign off without the training in all steps of the process and oversight by a licensed professional? These systems are not broken.

I urge you to vote against Assembly Bill 320.

Kathryn F. Tyson, AIA

(608) 515 – 3547 cell

ktyson717@gmail.com

Thank you, committee chair and committee members, for your time today, I appreciate getting the chance to share my knowledge on this matter.

My name is Andrea Cecelia, I am a licensed Architect in the State of Wisconsin, in addition to Illinois, Minnesota and Iowa. I have worked throughout the Midwest over the past 17 years. I am a part owner of a small firm in Madison and actively working on a handful of projects in the state at this time.

My specialty the past few years has become Assisted Living Facilities. Our state has very stringent requirements for these facilities. Due to the health, safety and welfare of the residents. I have spent numerous hours learning the multiple code requirements as well as attending seminars on the building code, the mechanical code and the plumbing code for these facilities. It is my job to know how to make these buildings safe for your loved ones. For my Architectural license I am required to attend seminars on the topic of health safety and welfare in building design, this is not the case for registered interior designers. As an Architect I not only design the layout of the facilities but also assist in coordinating the structural, mechanical, plumbing and electrical. While I don't design the MEP engineering, I know enough of their requirements to help coordinate their designs into our building as well as knowing how to best design to limit the spread of Legionnaires disease within the building, how to design the ability of pressure differential to reduce the spread of germs within the facility.

The importance of understanding the health safety and welfare of building design can be seen in a few examples I have for you. First, imagine sitting at your desk working and a fire alarm goes off, that initial noise causes you to flinch or jump, nothing major but a slight reaction. Now imagine a surgeon in the middle of any procedure and a fire alarm goes off. Any flinch could be catastrophic for that patient. Architects understand and have the knowledge to design a surgery suite to alert the staff without causing a sudden flinch by that doctor as well as how to design when any emergency that arises gives that doctor time to either finish or get the patient stabilized before reacting to the emergency without putting that patient in danger.

Another example is the assisted living facilities that I have designed. Imagine February in Wisconsin with an ice storm and a fire breaks out in the facility. It would not be safe for those residents to walk outside and evacuate the building. As an Architect I know how to design the facility to allow the residents to shelter within the building so as not to put them in danger by leaving the building. In addition to designing the building to reduce the passage of smoke and slow the progression of a fire until the fire department can respond.

Both of these examples highlight the importance the knowledge Architects have and are required to update themselves on yearly, a requirement that does not exist for registered interior designers.

My time and energy today is to inform this committee on the importance on our licensing for the health safety and welfare of the public. That is why I sit before you today, I urge you to amend AB 320 to remove the phrase "the practice of Architecture" or vote against the bill in the best interest of the public of Wisconsin. At the end of the day we all, my colleagues and you esteemed committee members hold the public's best interest at heart and that is what we should all remember.

May 17, 2021

My name is Ryan Frank and I oppose AB320.

Graduating from college in 2011 I first received my architecture license in 2015 from the state of Iowa. Since then, I have spent my entire licensed career practicing in the state of Wisconsin. I am proud of the time, dedication, and work that myself and other architecture colleagues have put into this profession, helping to create better designed, safe, and sustainable buildings.

We pride our work on collaboration, both in the industry and out. It takes a team to lead a successful project and we are at the forefront ensuring that buildings have a successful outcome for their users. As the team captain we lead our engineering team, specialists, interior designers to ensure the utmost coordination of design, documentation and detailing, and code compliance.

It does take all of us, but I am opposed to this bill because interior designers do not have the same role as architects nor education ability and should not be able to practice architecture. Becoming a licensed architect requires much more rigorous training and experience and our concern is that the health, safety, and welfare of the public would be compromised with the passage of this legislation. Architects work with interior designers throughout their entire career, so much so that even in the state of Wisconsin an interior designer can become a licensed architect after working under an architect for 10 years and taking the Architecture Registration Exam. This is to ensure proper training and knowledge of building systems, building envelope design, code compliance, zoning and state building review processes, construction oversight, and other processes to ensure quality design and construction. It is clear this bill disregards all processes currently in place to ensure the safety of buildings and their occupants and disregards the importance of the architect in leading the process.

Please oppose AB320 to protect the architecture profession and the safety of the public.

Sincerely,

Ryan Frank, AIA
OPN Architects

Thank-you to the Chair and Members of the Assembly Regulatory Licensing Reform Committee, for considering my strong concerns and objections regarding bill AB320:

For over forty years, I have been a constituent, an active Wisconsin Architect, and a former owner of a woman-owned, Milwaukee area architecture & interior design firm. I want to alert you to my strong concerns and objections to AB320 as it is currently written. The bill attempts to realize a long sought after interior design licensure & scope of practice definition. Yet as written, this bill still contains very serious shortcomings that should be addressed before any such legislation is made law.

Commercial registered interior designers have been seeking relevant licensure status for years. I support that a registered interior designer should be permitted some range of professional design supervisory rights and project responsibilities, as opposed to those of an unqualified, non-registered interior designer/decorator. But, such licensure qualifications should be well-founded and defined. Furthermore, they should accurately consider existing regulations and equal treatment under the law. **AB320 does NOT do so.**

By now you have likely heard or read some objections/edits raised by a number of other professionals; and hopefully you have read the recommendations proposed by the American Institute of Architects-Wisconsin. I recognize and agree with those recommendations, but my primary concerns remain as follows:

1. **A registered interior designer is NOT a registered architect, and should not be allowed to practice architecture.** There is need to consider that commercial space design or an alteration affects the public safety not only within that space, but throughout the entire building. This means that a professional-in-charge must comprehend the interdependency of building codes, construction type(s), occupancy class(es), multiple environmental/safety features, etc. Architects are educated, tested and responsible for this comprehensive degree of understanding in order to seal/stamp project plans—even when doing so for partial space alterations. Interior designers are not professionally educated, nor nationally-tested, to focus to this necessarily comprehensive degree.
2. **Existing Wisconsin law has established and clearly defines when the scope of a project requires architectural supervision.** The law states that a building project with volume over 50,000 cubic feet requires supervision by a registered architect. Therefore, the scope of any “interior alteration” project, or combination of such projects within a building, that is in excess of the 50,000 CF limit should not be allowed to be seal/stamped and supervised by a registered interior designer. Passage of the proposed legislation as drafted would egregiously conflict with existing law that dictates supervision by an architect.
3. **The proposed bill fails to establish any quantifiable project limit or scope for “interior design” work.** The bill’s open-ended definitions are potentially dangerous regarding public health and safety, which exist much beyond just determining egress plans. Interior architecture alteration projects do not spatially function exclusive of the total building volume/structure/construction. The reality is that any space alteration functionally impacts the entire building. A professional-in-charge must understand the existing building’s construction type & rated-material assemblies; the multiple safety features & systems, the comprehensive code dictates, and all adjacent user-occupants within the structure. This greater scope of parameters is exactly what an architect is required to comprehend and address when preparing any interior architecture project, and the subsequent project calculations & construction documents.
4. **The proposed bill lacks establishment of any professional oversight board for a licensed interior designer, such as what already exists for architects, engineers and other licensed design professionals.** These extreme deficiencies would result in unequal treatment and conflict with existing protective law. They must to be addressed within the bill as written and before passage should be considered. Passage of this proposed legislation would fail to provide equal treatment of registered design professionals under Wisconsin law.

I implore this **Committee and the Wisconsin Assembly to take NO ACTION on this legislation now**, in order to allow for these and other very serious deficiencies and disadvantages to be addressed.

Patricia A. Frost, Emeritus AIA
Whitefish Bay, WI 53217

05/17/2021

Thank you for your time chair and committee members for your time this morning. My name is C. Brett Rottinghaus, I am not a license Architect yet but I did just complete my licensure exams and required hours to be able to apply for my license. Now I am just waiting for the paper work to be processed by the board. In my journey to become a licensed Architect I have learned a lot about what it means to be entrusted with the health, safety and welfare of the public. I view this has a huge responsibility and honor to be a part of safeguarding. While the schooling, hours and testing were some of the toughest tasks of my life, I view it as my personal responsibility in order to call myself an Architect. When the public hears that someone is an Architect, they know that the specific individual has received training and proven themselves to be knowledgeable. Architects have to evaluate codes, zoning regulations, requests from clients, and respect the community their projects live in, all while making sure that their efforts are protecting the public they serve. In Wisconsin there is already a path to licensure for Interior designers if they want to partake in this responsibility. They can take the same Architecture Registration Exams (ARE) that I had to take to apply to become an Architect. Once they take and pass the ARE's they can apply to be called an Architect. I hope you understand and share in my concern of being able to call yourself an Architect, or at minimum fulfill the responsibilities of an Architect, without taking the necessary testing to make sure you are adequately prepared to perform the duties the title requires. Again, thank you for your time. And I urge your to vote against this bill.

Sincerely, C. Brett Rottinghaus

Brett Rottinghaus

OPN Architects

o: (608) 819-0260 | d: (608) 819-0841 | brottinghaus@opnarchitects.com

301 N. Broom St., Suite 100, Madison, WI, 53703

www.opnarchitects.com

Dear Committee Chair and Members,

My name is Michael Booth I am a licensed Architect in the state of WI. I am writing to urge you to not pass bill AB320 that would allow the interior design profession to practice architecture. The issue is not whether an interior designer can create a pleasing aesthetic design but rather that they have not received the proper education or training in protecting the health, safety and welfare of building occupants.

Post-graduation I worked professionally for 8 years prior to beginning the examination process. I spent two years going through the test process and studying with various engineers to help my understanding of the test material. I spent 14 years of my life with the inclusion of school to learn enough about architecture to get through the examination process. The tests and training required are robust because the responsibility associated with architecture is a serious one. An architect is responsible for the wellbeing of its buildings occupants and people spend 90% of their lives in doors.

A surgeon and pharmacist are both capable professionals that practice in the field of medicine. Only one however is qualified to operate. The same is true of architects and interior designers working in the built environment. Please do not oversimplify a complex industry and vote no on Bill AB320.

Sincerely,

Michael Booth

David G. Peterson AIA
Architect

430 McKinley Avenue
Eau Claire, WI 54701
715 529 0976
davep@2dlp.com
www.2dlp.com



Opposition to LRB-0245 Proposed Interior Design Licensure Bill

I, David Peterson AIA, a member of AIAWisconsin, am opposed to LRB-0245 in its current form. I live in Eau Claire, Wisconsin where I have practiced architecture since 1971.

I am a graduate of the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, the first public school of architecture in the United States. The State of Illinois recognized the need for a profession to design buildings for the "Health, Safety, and Welfare" of its residents, so it established the school over 100 years ago.

As an Architect, my education included all aspects of the design of buildings including structural, plumbing, heating, electrical design, site design. The responsibility for oversight during construction process usually resides with an Architect. Through education, experience in the profession, and passing an accredited national architectural exam, can one receive an Architectural license.

Wisconsin statutes define what an Architect is and what the duties are. These standards must be maintained. The basic duty of a licensed Architect is the same as the need the State of Illinois recognized the need for a profession to design buildings for the "Health, Safety, and Welfare" of its residents over 100 years ago.

Fortunately, various paths exist to obtain licensure as an Architect in Wisconsin. Most have been based on at least eight years of experience under the supervision of a licensed Architect and then taking an exam. In this model, no formal education was required. Current models now include a mixture of education and time supervised and an exam.

My degree, which was a five year program, qualified for five years of the eight. After three years working under supervision of an Architect, I could sit for the national exam. After passing the exam in December 1974 and three licensed Architects attested to my abilities, I finally was licensed in 1975.

Since then, more paths to licensure are available. They still are some form of the eight year concept. These are available now to everyone including Interior Designers.

Let me give you some personal examples.

Our firm hired a talented person with a degree in Interior Design. We helped her with required prerequisites leading up to taking the exam. She past on her first try. Her degree and time working with us met the eight year rule.

We also helped two others obtain their licenses. Both had a 2 degrees from local technical colleges. After meeting the experience time requirement, they took and past the architectural exam.

Since various paths to license are available, certainly Interior Designers can pursue one of these paths instead the suggested statute change. Some have already. the rest should follow.

The current statutes should not be changed unless modified. I have attached the position statement of AIA Wisconsin for reference

Sincerely

David G Peterson

David G Peterson AIA

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO LRB-0245

AIA Wisconsin and its member architects are committed to the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of the public. Therefore, we stand opposed to LRB-0245 in its current form. More specifically, our objection is to the repeal and revision of 440.96(1) of the current statute which has been renumbered to 440.96(1r)(b)

CURRENT DEFINITION OF INTERIOR DESIGN PER WI STATUTES

440.96(1) "Interior design" means the design of interior spaces in conformity with public health, safety and welfare requirements, including the preparation of documents relating to space planning, finish materials, furnishings, fixtures and equipment and the preparation of documents relating to interior construction that does not substantially affect the mechanical or structural systems of a building. "Interior design" does not include services that constitute the practice of architecture or the practice of professional engineering.

PROPOSED REVISED DEFINITION OF INTERIOR DESIGN PER WI STATUTES

440.96 (1r) (a) "Interior design" means the design of interior spaces as a part of an interior alteration or construction project in conformity with public health, safety and welfare requirements, including the preparation of documents relating to building code descriptions, egress plans, space planning, finish materials, furnishings, fixtures, and equipment and the preparation of documents interior technical submissions relating to interior construction that does not substantially affect the mechanical or structural systems of a building.

(b) "Interior design" does not include services any of the following:

1. Services that constitute the practice of architecture or the practice of professional engineering.

CURRENT DEFINITION OF PRACTICE OF ARCHITECTURE PER WI STATUTES

443.01(5) "Practice of architecture" includes any professional service, such as consultation, investigation, evaluation, planning, architectural and structural design, or responsible supervision of construction, in connection with the construction of any private or public buildings, structures, projects, or the equipment thereof, or addition to or alterations thereof, in which the public welfare or the safeguarding of life, health or property is concerned or involved. While we recognize and value the work of our interior design partners, the practice of architecture is a regulated profession and should not be included as subset of the scope of interior design services. The striking of the words "the practice of architecture" also creates a conflict with 440.96(1r)(a) in that "structural systems" are components of the definition of the scope of architectural services. Therefore, the revised language prohibits affecting the structural system of a building but allows it through the incorporation of the "practice of architecture." Considering this, we propose the following amendment to the language included in LRB-0245:

PROPOSED REVISED DEFINITION OF INTERIOR DESIGN PER WI STATUTES

440.96 (1r) (a) Practice of "Interior design" means the design of interior spaces as a part of an interior alteration or construction project in conformity with public health, safety and welfare requirements, including the preparation of documents relating to building code descriptions, egress plans, space planning, finish materials, furnishings, fixtures, and equipment and the preparation of documents interior technical submissions relating to interior construction that does not substantially affect the mechanical or structural systems of a building.

(b) The practice of "Interior design" does not include services any of the following:

1. Services that constitute the practice of architecture or the practice of professional engineering.

The American Institute of Architects
AIA Wisconsin
321 S Hamilton St Madison, WI 53703
T (608) 257-8477

May 17, 2021

Regarding Bill AB 320.

State of Wisconsin Committee Chair and Members.

My name is Michael McMahon and I have been in the building profession as a Wisconsin Registered Architect for over 35 years. In addition, I am a registered architect in 16 other States. I am very proud to be a registered architect having invested in years of education, on the job experience and practice of the profession. I am also very proud of the fact that my home state of registration is Wisconsin, the state where I was born, educated and where my firm exists. I can also tell you I have nothing against the interior design profession, I have been married to a very talented commercial interior designer for the past 26 years.

However, I do not agree that permitting Interior designers to perform architectural design is in the best interest of the State of Wisconsin for the following reasons:

- Interior Designers are not required to have completed the level of education and practical experience necessary to provide licensed architectural services.
- They are not required to complete the level of annual continuing education credits as an Architect is.
- They do not have the broad understanding of the commercial building code to accurately interpret or understand the detailed implementation of the code.
- They are not held to the same ethical standard as a licensed Architect.
- They are not held professionally accountable as an Architect is.

In my career I have been mentored by several Architects and am now doing my part to mentor our State's future Architects. No component of a building design exists disconnected from the overall building and building systems. Interior design is one of these design components. I do not believe an interior designer can protect the public health safety and welfare as well as a registered architect for the reasons stated above.

I do not support this bill and urge you to vote against it.

Thank You.

Michael J McMAHON, AIA

6563 Ridge Royale Drive

Greenleaf, WI 54126

MMCMAHON@MCMGRP.COM

May 17, 2021

Re: Testimony for Wisconsin Assembly Bill 320

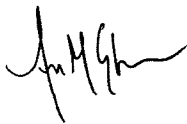
I am a licensed architect in the state of Wisconsin and Illinois and have been practicing architecture for about 25 years. I have spent my last 15 years at Kahler Slater where I am a Principal own in the firm and lead many large projects. This was not an easy path and I want to share a bit of my story on how I got here – though my path is not atypical. Like many architects, I have a Bachelor's and a Master's degree in Architecture. This included coursework in design, structures, MEP/FP systems, codes, etc. After completing 6 years of higher education, I embarked on an apprenticeship program administered by NCARB (the National licensing boards for architects) which ensured that I received a well-rounded experience working under the direct supervision of an architect. Once that was complete, I was able to sit for my license which was about 5 days worth of testing. Only then could I call myself an architect. To maintain this credential, I have to satisfy continuing education requirements each year, many of which are focused on the Health, Safety and Welfare aspects to stay current with the ever changing world of building science.

I mention all of this to demonstrate that the training to be an architect is rigorous - and for good reason. Architects are the master coordinators of a design project and we need to have a broad understanding of all the issues and allied fields in order to practice architecture. We are the leaders of a complex team of qualified consultants including structural engineers, civil engineers, landscape architects, mechanical/plumbing engineers, and even interior designers. Our training and experience informs us how to site a building on the land, design the exterior envelope - to look good and stay weathertight, make sure the plans meet safe exiting criteria for occupants, understanding where fireproofing is needed, meet a myriad of life safety requirements, and meet environmental concerns, etc. This is just scratching the surface of what it is like to practice architecture.

If the proposed Assembly Bill 320 moves forward without amendment, it would permit interior designs to 'practice architecture' and that is way too broad of a term as noted by some of the examples above. Without proper training, testing, and licensure, allowing interior designers to expand their scope of services would jeopardize the public's health, safety, and welfare – which is the primary job of an architect to protect in the built environment.

Please don't hesitate to contact me at any time if you have questions.

Sincerely,



Aaron M. Ebent, AIA, LEED AP BD+C
aebent@kahlerslater.com
414-897-1990

May 18, 2021

Mr Chairman, Members of the Committee

Thank you for this opportunity to communicate with you.

My name is Ralph Jackson, I live in Dane County and I am an Architect. Although I have no objection to the formal registration of Interior Designers I am speaking today in opposition to AB320 because of it's current language.

I earned the right to call myself an Architect in 1965 after 5 years of professional education, 3 years of service in the Air Force, followed by extensive training and mentoring under the guidance of registered Architects who then vouched for my competence. The culmination was taking and passing almost a week of tests in a variety of pertinent subjects as mandated by the State.

That was 56 years ago and I have tried to live up to the State's certification of me as an Architect ever since. For most of that time I have been associated with the firm now known as Flad Architects. Toward the end of my career it was my privilege to serve as Flad's president, overseeing a practice employing over 300 with offices around the country.

As a registered Architect I have put my seal and signature on hundreds of architectural documents which were prepared under my direction. I fully understand the legal and ethical responsibility which that act incurs. I take that responsibility very seriously, as must anyone who stamps and signs official documents! Every Architect has a similar story of the effort it took for them to earn the right to be registered, and what that has meant for their career. Those stories are often more daunting for those Architects who are women.

That brings up a related topic. You may hear today the accusation that the Architects, who are predominately male, are opposed to the registration of Interior Designers because they are predominately female, due to some sort of gender bias. I am a male Architect. I don't believe that I am personally gender biased. However, in the interest of obtaining some statistics which might clarify the facts for at least a portion of our profession, I contacted my previous firm. This is what I learned:

Flad employs 319 people in Madison and offices around the country. 127 are women. That is 40%. Flad employs 177 registered Architects. 59 (33%) are women. So, even though a majority of Architects are still male, the gender ratio in our profession is changing.

Flad employs 19 titled Interior Designers. All but two of them are women. So Interior Designers are still predominately female.

However, at least at Flad, new hires with 4 year undergraduate degrees in architecture and those with 4 year degrees in interior design receive exactly the same starting compensation, with absolutely no differentiation due to specific education or gender. That does not indicate any bias by Architects, at least at Flad.

Since I retired from Flad in 2008 I have maintained a small architectural consulting practice, primarily doing work as a volunteer for non-profit clients. Accordingly, I continue to maintain my architectural license. That means that I must fulfill the requirements of State registration by

taking at least 24 hours of continuing education courses every two years. At least 16 of those credits must come from courses certified as containing information critical for understanding topics relative to maintaining the Health, Safety and Welfare of those who will use the facilities which I might design as an Architect. Currently, many of these courses deal with the evolving necessity to design in a way which drastically reduces the release of carbon into the atmosphere. Architects, because of our education and training, are at the forefront of the efforts which will be required to significantly reduce the huge impact of buildings on climate change.

During my career I have often worked with Interior Designers as valued members of project teams. I respect and appreciate the many contributions which they are able to make because of their depth of knowledge within their areas of expertise. However, those specific areas represent only a portion of what is needed to “practice architecture” with a wholistic view, considering all of the divergent components of a successful design as Architects are educated and trained to do. Interior Designers are not Architects and any legislation granting them registration as Interior Designers must make that clear.

If AB320 were passed in it’s present form, removing the clause in the current title legislation for Interior Designers which specifically clarifies that Interior Designers are not permitted to practice architecture, that, unfortunately, would imply that they could practice architecture. The unintended consequence might lead to inappropriately applying an Interior Designer’s seal and signature where an Architect’s is really needed in order to maintain the Health, Safety and Welfare of ultimate occupants. That is not only wrong, it is potentially dangerous.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge this committee to vote down AB320 in it’s present form. At least insist on adding back in the wording of the current title legislation which clarifies that Interior Design does not include the practice of architecture. That will be important as a legal guide for those who will subsequently promulgate the specific rules under which registered Interior Designers will practice.

Thank you for your attention. Are there any questions?

Ralph H. Jackson Jr. AIA
4519 Rocky Dell Road
Cross Plains, WI. 53528

Good morning,

I would like to register and supply written testimony in opposition of the bill.

I have sent emails to my legislators in both Middleton, where I live, and Madison, where I work.

I have worked as a registered architect in Madison for over 32 years. Our firm has been providing architecture and interior design services in Wisconsin for over 108 years. We employ both Interior Designers and Architects. I am concerned about the bill that will allow interior designers to stamp construction drawings. AB 320 otherwise known as the interior design bill. The current interior design law clearly states that interior design is not the practice of architecture, this bill strikes that language allowing interior designers to practice architecture and stamp drawings for buildings of any size.

In a handful of states that have interior designers with stamping privileges, all of them differentiate and protect the practice of architecture. In those handful of states with interior design practice laws, all of them clearly differentiate what interior designers can and cannot do to protect the public's health safety, and welfare. The language in this bill is silent in that regard. Also, those laws state that Interior designers cannot perform services on certain types of occupancies, and buildings more than two stories or 5000 ft.² They also should not be allowed to stamp drawings that include building code components like firewalls, fire barriers, rated partitions, and egress components like exit stairs. Additional language needs to be added to this bill.

Finally, if interior designers want to be licensed design professionals with stamping privileges like architects and engineers they should abide by the same rules, including joining our examining board having disciplinary proceedings following professional conduct rules and continuing education requirements especially those in health safety welfare topics. Increased professional standards need to be added to the bill.

The interior designers that work in our office are very professional and knowledgeable about many aspects of interior design, finishes, and furniture and are an integral part of our team. They have the ability to create interior space plans, but they do not want to be responsible for building code components related to life safety.

Thank you for your work and your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug Hursh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Doug Hursh, AIA, LEED AP

Potter Lawson, Inc.

749 University Row, Suite 300 | Madison WI, 53705

T - 608.274.2741

www.potterlawson.com

Kahler Slater

Milwaukee
Madison
Richmond
Chicago
Singapore

To whom it may concern,

RE: Opposition to Assembly Bill AB 320

111 West Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53203
P 414.272.2000

My name is Joe Jurkiewicz. I am an architect and Associate Principal with Kahler Slater Architects. We are a multidisciplinary firm of over 120 persons that offers Architecture, Interior Design, Environmental Branding, and other design services. We practice on a global basis with offices in Milwaukee, Madison, Richmond, Chicago, and Singapore.

I am sorry that work obligations prevent me from testifying in person before this Committee and I appreciate the opportunity to submit this written testimony.

I have been working in the architectural profession since 1973 and have been licensed as an architect in Wisconsin since 1980. Throughout my career I have worked with interior designers, both as independent consultants and as coworkers within the same firm.

I served as AIA Wisconsin's representative on the Department of Safety and Professional Services Safety and Buildings Division Commercial Building Code Council from 2002 to 2011. I am currently in the second year of a three-year appointment to the American Institute of Architects National Codes and Standards Committee. I also am a corporate member of the International Code Council, the authors of the current suite of building codes, as well as the National Fire Protection Association.

I offer my background information to show my experience level as a design professional as well as specific experience focused on developing and using building and other life safety codes and to lend credibility to my concern for the health, safety, and welfare of the public if this Bill is to pass.

I am asking for you to oppose AB320 because I believe it will endanger public safety by allowing Interior Designers to practice architecture without the proper training, examination, and experience.

Architects are licensed to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public. That is a responsibility that comes based on training, experience, and examination. Once licensed, Architects are required by both the state and the American Institute of Architects to comply with yearly continuing education requirements. A significant portion of that continuing education must be dedicated to health, safety, and welfare topics. The amount of continuing education that Interior Designers are required to attend is significantly less than that of architects and does not include any requirement for health, safety and welfare education. Our profession is changing on a daily basis and it is important that design professionals remain current and up to date.

As I mentioned above, I have worked extensively with interior designers and have nothing but the utmost respect for them and the contributions they make to the built environment. I must also say that Interior Designers, while qualified to practice interior design, are not qualified to practice architecture without specialized training, experience and examination. I state this from experience. I have worked with many interior designers who also hold an architect's license for just that reason.

Please understand that this is not a practice issue and I have no issue with an interior designer practicing architecture provided they are properly credentialed as an architect. There is no impediment to an interior designer sitting for the architectural exam and with the required experience receiving a license to practice architecture.

Interior design comprises a narrow slice of the built environment. As Architects we are trained to look at a building in its entirety and deal with all the systems and components within it. This training is necessary to understand the impact of the limited scope of most interior design projects on the entire building to make sure the overall building is not compromised.

In Wisconsin there are 35 chapters plus appendices in the Building Code and 16 Chapters plus appendices in the Existing Building Code. These codes are interrelated and knowledge of all the chapters is necessary to make sure the overall building safety is not compromised based on a project of limited scope somewhere within the building.

For instance, given a certain scope of work within an existing building without fire sprinkler protection, the building code may require the entire floor of a building or even the entire building be provided with automatic fire sprinklers. In my experience, interior designers are not aware of this requirement unless an architect is involved.

Application of certain finishes and/or insulation to the interior side of an exterior wall (something that will be permitted by this bill) can alter the temperature gradient and dewpoint within that wall potentially causing the degradation and ultimate failure of the wall.

Another example is accessibility. The existing building the code requires entrances and bathrooms that serve a remodeled area to be made accessible regardless of whether they are within the scope of work for the remodeling project. Again, in my experience, most interior designers are not aware of or will ignore this requirement because they are not under contract to do that additional work. These are only a few examples of situations where work may be necessary outside the apparent limits of a project.

Architects are licensed to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public. That standard is higher than what may be required under a typical design contract. Our training, experience and testing ensure the public is protected. That is a process that has developed over many decades. It is not perfect but does adequately fulfill its mission.

For this reason, current Wisconsin law requires an Architect's or Professional Engineer's seal on design documents when a building has more than 50,000 cubic feet in volume. Further, the construction of that design needs to be supervised by an Architect or Professional Engineer and a statement from that supervising professional needs to be filed with the Department upon completion of the construction. The liability of the professional for sealing plans and supervising construction extends for 10 years past the completion of the project. This bill makes no mention of how this and other liability issues will be assigned, I believe reducing the protection of the public.

AIA Wisconsin has offered a compromise to the wording of this bill that restores the current wording specifically stating that Interior Design does not constitute the practice of Architecture. The interior designers are not interested in accepting this amended language, I believe because it will stop them from expanding their areas of practice to include the practice of architecture.

Passage of this bill will reduce the protection of the health, safety and welfare of the public and make the built environment less safe. I respectfully ask you to vote against it in its current form.

I appreciate your time on this issue and would be happy to discuss it further if you would like.

I can be reached at jjurkiewicz@kahlerslater.com or on my cell at 414-313-0790.

Joseph G. Jurkiewicz, AIA
837 Ulao Road
Grafton, WI 53024

May 16th, 2021

Assembly Committee on Regulatory Licensure Reform

Thank you, committee chair and committee members, for your time in reading my testimony.

My name is Brad Peterson and I am a design professional within the field of architecture, currently traversing the path of licensure. I am an Associate member rep of AIA Wisconsin and serve as the Associate member on AIA's Strategic Council. I have held this position for going on three years now and have been working in the field for six.

As someone who recently had to navigate the educational requirements for the profession, and is currently undertaking the testing and practical requirements, I am well poised to offer insight into level of complexity that an aspiring architect's education and testing requirements demand of them.

The primary issue with AB 320 as it is currently written is unarguably the language that includes the *practice of architecture* within the scope of an Interior Designer's work. While I have specific statutory requirements to seek licensure in the state, this bill removes all those education and experience requirements for an interior designer, only to replace them with an independent organization. If an interior designer is *practice architecture*, why are they not required to have the same level of oversight?

Another point that is concerning to the health, safety and welfare of the public is the removal of any continuing educational requirements. Currently, Wisconsin Registered Interior Designers are required to complete a minimum of 9 hours of credits on a two-year cycle, but none of these hours need be related to the health, safety and welfare of the public, or HSWs. If interior designers are to *practice architecture*, why does their continued educational requirement not reflect same level of scrutiny that architects face? With ever changing building codes and technology that both help and hinder in creating healthy, safe, and hospitable buildings, why are Interior Designers exempt from the requirement to stay up to date as architects must?

Finally, while architects have greater experience and education requirements, they also have much greater oversight from the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS). While the Joint Examining Board of Architects has three professional and two public members for oversight, this bill does nothing to address oversight of Interior Designers and how their conduct will be reviewed. If Interior Designers are to *practice architecture*, why are they not governed in the same way that architects are?

In conclusion, bill AB 320 is flawed in several ways that put the public's health, safety and welfare at risk, but the most critical of which is the stricken language that indicates that interior design includes the *practice of architecture*. This is conceptually flawed, and should be unacceptable to the general public, and especially this legislative body. I strongly urge you to vote against bill AB 320.

Sincerely,

Brad Peterson

I am a licensed architect who's been living and working in the Fox Cities for the last twenty years. I wrote to Representative Rohrkaste early last year regarding the same matter. His response to one of my colleagues who had written to him prior to me made me realize he didn't understand the difference between the professions of architecture and interior design. I was very grateful for Representative Rohrkaste's willingness to listen to what I had to say and felt that he truly understood the difference between the two professions after we communicated.

I hope you feel the same way as Representative Rohrkaste about me communicating some of the same information in hopes that you see why I feel so strongly opposed to Assembly Bill 320. The amount of education, training hours, study time and exams it takes to become a licensed architect in the state of Wisconsin is far beyond any of the requirements to become an interior designer. I have a bachelor's degree and a master's degree. After completing my education, I worked at a firm for 5 years before starting to take my architecture exams. There were 9 exams to complete at that time. Each exam required several months of study time. It took me several years to complete all 9 exams and become licensed. As a licensed architect, I'm required to do continuing education on a regular basis. I turned 48 this year and just finished paying off my school loans last year. To see this bill under consideration makes me feel more than a little emotional at the thought of interior designers now doing the work that I do without having to put the same amount of education, time and expense into their profession.

Interior designers do not go through this type of education or training because they do not perform the same type of work as architects. There is a reason architects are required to prepare certain types of documents that interior designers cannot – architects have qualifications that interior designs don't have. The profession of architecture is there to protect public health and safety. It's important to understand the differences in these two professions. To not understand this and vote in favor of the bill would be a real shame. Allowing interior designers who don't have the proper education and training to do the same work that architects are doing will impact public health and safety. You will be voting to devalue our profession. If an interior designer wants to stamp documents and perform the same work that an architect performs, then they have the choice to become an architect and get licensed. Why is a bill being introduced to circumvent licensing for one profession that is required for another?

I'm asking that you vote against Assembly Bill 320 and support the profession of architecture in Wisconsin which is there to protect public health and safety. As you can tell this is extremely important to me and it is to all of the architects that I've spoken to. This may not have a big impact on your lives, but it is a very big deal to our profession. And, contrary to what you've been told by the interior design community, architecture isn't just a man's profession. I'm a woman who's worked in this profession since 1999. This isn't about gender or a turf war – this is about upholding professional standards and holding people accountable to make hard choices if they want more out of their professional careers.

Thank you for your time,

Marley A. Gast, AIA, NCARB

Associate / Senior Architect



1445 McMahan Dr | Neenah, WI 54956

O: 920.751.4200 | C: 920.858.1132

Testimony opposing AB 320, as Drafted.

I am a sole practitioner offering architectural design services. I have been licensed to practice architecture in Wisconsin since 1977. I have specialized expertise in “useable architecture” both in design and code development. Most of my practice involves affordable housing, especially in small Wisconsin communities where the rent-assisted housing is in need of rehabilitation and updating. When the projects require more than my individual efforts I collaborate with other firms of architects and interior designers.

My clients have been in many Wisconsin communities, including ten municipal and one tribal housing authorities: City of Washburn, Bayfield County, Brillion, Trempealeau County, the Red Cliff Band of the Lake Superior Chippewa, Beloit CDA, Dodge County, Stoughton Boscobel and Oregon, Wisconsin.

The Interior Designers’ messaging goes something like this:

1. Interior Designers have the same education, experience, and examination requirements. Therefore, they should be allowed to practice architecture.
2. 17-27 states have interior design laws. Wisconsin needs to get with the times and conform to this industry standard.
3. Let’s avoid this “pesky procedural step” of having an architect “approve” our documents to save time and money.
4. This is nothing more than a turf war between architects and interior designers. This is “the man,” i.e.-white, male architects, trying to keep small, women-owned businesses down.

In my opinion, their messaging is misleading.

1. Architects and interior designers do not have the same education, experience, and examination requirements. Interior designers are not be allowed to practice architecture in the 49 states that regulate the practice of architecture, including Wisconsin. That is the industry standard.
2. Approximately twenty states have interior design laws. These are “title laws,” and Wisconsin is one of them. They grant interior designers who have met their profession’s education, experience, and examination requirements the ability to distinguish themselves as Wisconsin Registered Interior Designers. Only a handful of states have “practice laws” which allow interior designers to practice interior design, not architecture, and submit documents for permitting

purposes. This privilege is a rare anomaly and not industry standard, and it comes with numerous safeguards to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

3. Architects do not “approve” interior designer’s documents; only the Department of Safety and Professional Services and certain delegated municipalities have the authority to conditionally approve construction documents. In order to sign, seal, or stamp any plans, they must be prepared under an architect’s “personal direction and control.” This takes time for a thorough, extensive review to see how the project affects the entire building, and, in doing so, the architect takes all the responsibility and liability for the project for 10 years. This kind of responsible supervision is normal for architects and serves to protect the public’s health and safety in use of the buildings.

4. This is not a simple turf war between architects and interior designers, as evidenced by the variety of other organizations that showed up today to register in opposition to this bill. This is about protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

My strong and specific objection to the language of bill is simple: if interior designers want to be licensed design professionals with permitting privileges, like architects and engineers, then in order to protect public health & safety it’s imperative that they abide by the same state statutes and administrative code requirements as architects and engineers.

I ask that you vote “no” on this bill in its present form. Amending the language in Section 440.96 (1r)(b)1 that allows interior designers to practice architecture would assure the continued protection of public health & safety and that would make the bill acceptable to me.

Thank you for your consideration of my views.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'thomhirsch', written in a cursive style.

Thomas Hirsch, FAIA
May 18, 2021

Thank you, committee chair and committee members, for your time today, I appreciate getting the chance to share my knowledge on this matter.

My name is Todd Grunwaldt, I am a licensed architect and have practiced architecture primarily in Wisconsin for 32 years. I co-own a small architectural/engineering firm in Madison, WI.

My focus has been the design of Assisted Living Facilities and Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF). These types of facilities are governed by state and federal agencies. They are also regulated by many building codes in addition to our model code the International Building Code (IBC). I have spent years understanding these codes and keeping up with their continuing changes. Challenging yes, however these codes are adopted to protect the occupants of our buildings and keep them safe.

Health, Safety and Welfare. The 3 words we see when attending all the seminars required to keep our professional licenses current and our American Institute of Architects (AIA) membership. The industry is constantly changing. Most recently with the Covid Pandemic, we are responding to the industry by incorporating Mechanical changes for infectious disease control. We recently made Plumbing fixture changes to address Legionnaires Disease. Also, we are responding to people with hearing and visual challenges in our Electrical devices that we implement into our buildings to make them safer for residents and to evacuate their buildings safely. These systems require a knowledge of Mechanical and Electrical codes, trends and industry standards that are critical to the design of an Assisted Living Facility or SNF.

We are also responding to our industry by creating facilities that offer Aging in Place meaning facilities can accommodate a person based upon their physical and mental needs and abilities without ever leaving the overall campus as those needs change or increase. Our buildings are designed with safety in mind. That is how we are taught, that is how we are wired. Health, Safety and Welfare. This is what makes are buildings safe and protects our residents and occupants.

I urge you to amend AB 320 to remove the phrase “the practice of Architecture”.

May 17, 2021

Regarding Bill AB 320.

State of Wisconsin Committee Chair and Members.

My name is Derek Gruber. I am a Wisconsin Registered Architect and have been in the architectural building profession for over 17 years. I am very proud to be a registered architect having invested in years of education, on the job experience and practice of the profession. I am also very proud of the fact that my home state of registration is Wisconsin, the state where I was born, educated and where the firm I work at exists. I can also tell you I have nothing against the interior design profession, I have worked with many interior designers in my career. Interior design is a valuable component to many building projects.

However, I do not agree that permitting Interior designers to perform architectural design is in the best interest of the State of Wisconsin for the following reasons:

- They are not held to the same ethical standard as a licensed Architect.
- They do not have the broad understanding of the commercial building code to accurately interpret or understand the detailed implementation of the code.
- They are not required to complete the level of annual continuing education credits as an Architect is.
- Interior Designers are not required to have completed the level of education and practical experience necessary to provide licensed architectural services.
- They are not held professionally accountable as an Architect is.

Interior design is a component to a building. Architecture is a comprehensive field that not only includes interior design but has expertise in every other aspect of design. Allowing interior designers to perform architecture would be a disservice to our profession and the public.

I do not believe an interior designer can protect the public health safety and welfare as well as a registered architect for the reasons stated above. I do not support this bill and urge you to vote against it.

Thank You.

Derek Gruber, AIA

1145 McMahon Drive

Neenah, WI 54956

dgruber@mcmgrp.com

Thank you committee chair and committee members for your time.

My name is Jonathan Cecelia. I am an Architect licensed to practice in Wisconsin. Since 2015, I have worked at the University of Wisconsin Madison as an Architect, a Construction Representative, and as a Project Manager. Please note I am testifying to you as a Licensed Professional. In no way do my views and opinions represent my current employer, the University of Wisconsin Madison. From 2001 to 2015, I worked in Chicago, Illinois at a professional corporation that dealt with the maintenance, repair, and restoration of buildings. I was previously licensed as an Architect in Illinois; however, I have allowed my Illinois license to lapse since I no longer live or practice in the state.

My education prior to obtaining my Architecture License has provided me historical understanding of how the built environment has affected society. Of importance, classes in the layout of spaces, the design of structural steel framed construction, the design of reinforced concrete construction, and the design of wood framed construction. In addition, a knowledge of building materials and their design properties was required as part of my educational requirements. Understanding how building systems perform has allowed me to better understand points of potential failure and premature wear, which when left as is, can endanger the general health, safety, and welfare of the public

As a Licensed Architect, I have been involved with various building types including, residential (low and high rise), commercial, light industrial, educational (K-12 and higher education), and various religious structures. These structures have ranged in age from the late 1800's to modern buildings built within the last five years. Building construction types have varied from masonry load bearing, steel framed structures, reinforced concrete structures, curtain wall systems, and post tension concrete structures. Over my twenty years of work, I have had to use my professional knowledge to understand the various construction types and materials that I have encountered and understand how they are constructed to make a building. The practice of Architecture is not simply the design of a space, but an understanding of how the entire building system goes together to create a cohesive whole.

My previous work has provided me the opportunity to understand buildings from various viewpoints. My work required me to review existing conditions of a building, the creation of contract documents, and the observation of the construction work. These actions are generally thought by the general public as the traditional job duties of an Architect. However, my work also involved the creation Historic Structure Reports, Building Condition Studies, Building Transition Studies, Ornamental Steel Inspections, and Building Facade Inspections, which were all performed under the role of a Licensed Architect.

I bring up my previous work and education experiences as it demonstrates the wide variety of knowledge and depth of experience that is required to be a Licensed Architect. The current Assembly Bill 320 is problematic in its current form and language. Specifically, if an Interior Designer is to be allowed to practice Architecture in the state of Wisconsin, why are they not required to follow the same rules and regulations related to professional conduct that an Architect, per existing state statutes are required to meet? These state statutes have been established to ensure minimal standard of care is established to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the general public is maintained.

Current state statute (Wis Stats Section 440.96 (1r)(a) states "Interior Design" means the design of interior spaces in conformity with public health, safety and welfare requirements, including the preparation of documents relating to space planning, finish materials, furnishings, fixtures and equipment and the preparation of documents relating to interior constructions that does not

substantially affect the mechanical or structural systems of a building. "Interior design" does not include services that constitute the practice of architecture or the practice of professional engineering.

Simply amending the wording in a state statute to allow additional licensed professionals to practice another profession does not mean those individuals have the knowledge and understanding of health, safety, and welfare requirements needed to protect the public in their newfound profession.

I'll leave you with an example that my company was hired to address after it happened in Chicago, but very well could have occurred in Madison, Minneapolis, or any other city in the United State.

Inside a residential unit in a multi-story building, a customer requested an Architect to modify their residential space to include a loft. In performing their due diligence, the architect noted that the building structure was constructed of a concrete post tension slab. Review of tendon placement per existing drawings was performed. Reported locations of tendons were identified before the start of work. As part of the loft construction, a new wall was added to the unit floorplan. The wall was anchored to the floor slab. Unfortunately, upon anchoring the wall, a temperature tendon which was slightly misplaced when compared to the available drawings was hit, causing massive spalling to the concrete slab. Thankfully, the construction worker installing the anchor came out of the hospital with only a broken arm. For permitting purposes, this minor alteration was defined as an "Interior Alteration". The same "Interior Alteration" work that an Interior Designer will be permitted to perform if AB 320 passes as currently written. This Architect performed their due diligence prior to construction work, yet, unfortunately an issue still occurred.

I currently ask any Interior Designer in the room what the purpose of a temperature tendon is in a post tensioned concrete slab? What range in Kips might you find this cable stressed to? Will an Interior Designer know of the potential dangers of adding a wall in a minor "Interior Alteration" like this one? Would an Interior Designer even look at the slab construction since they were not even modifying the structural system?

When you go home tonight and google "post tensioning in concrete" and realize the forces that can be introduced to these tendons, you will see why this construction worker in the story above was extremely lucky to walk away with only a broken arm.

This is just one of many reasons I can provide you why the current language for practicing Architecture cannot be reduced. Interior designers play an important role in our society. However, the passing of AB 320 will reduce the standard for practicing Architecture and greatly increase the chance for the story above that happened in Chicago to occur in our great State of Wisconsin.

Therefore, I am politely requesting you to amend AB 320 to remove the phrase "the practice of Architecture" or vote against the bill in the best interest of the public of Wisconsin.

I thank the committee chair and members for their time.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Cecelia
License No: 11710-5

RE: Assembly Regulatory Licensing Reform Committee hearing on bill AB320. This bill would allow Interior Designers the opportunity and ability to stamp architectural drawings without having to go through the same school, testing, licensing, and continuing education as licensed Architects.

This is concerning.

As someone who has held a goal to become a licensed Architect from a young age, has gone through school, and is currently completing the necessary hours to be able to sit for the exams, I am both offended and concerned that the proper research and understanding has not been taken to fully understand what it means to be able to stamp or sign off on architectural drawings. The ability to stamp or sign off on drawings is not only a major step in one's career, but the "signing" Architect takes on a certain amount of liability for a building for a minimum of 10 years after completion.

In my own experience, I have had the recent opportunity to experience the schooling for both Interior Design as well as Architecture from a technical aspect, and I can say they are very different paths. While the two professions overlap, and should overlap for quality design, both of these fields have different paths in schooling. They focus on different aspects of a building and/or project. While in the Interior Design program, I learned mostly about color theory, materials and finishes to be applicable to certain projects and areas, and space-planning. All useful and important things. However, when I ultimately changed my career path to Architecture, I was taught Building Structures, how to read the Building Code and apply it to a project, and how to work within the limitations of each. While this is a small and condensed view of each major, I can say confidently that they are not the same set of tools and to say they are, is a gross misrepresentation of both careers.

In both my school and working career, it is evident to me how they are different and why passing this bill is not the right move. I know I am not the only aspiring Architect or practicing Architect that feels this way.

I strongly encourage you to not pass this bill, if only to prevent those who don't understand what it means and the time it takes to become a licensed Architect and the responsibility that is attached to the title and stamp.

Thank you for your time.

Allison Eicher

As an architect in Wisconsin and as a member of AIA-Wisconsin I OPPOSE the Interior Design legislation that is before the Assembly.

Proposed bill LRB-0245 (AB320) is a next generation of SB303 from last session. This bill passed the Senate but failed to get out of committee in the Assembly. If you would allow me, I would like to share our concerns with you.

I am a licensed architect and have practiced in Wisconsin for the last 30 years.

We (architects) as a profession, have no issue with the licensure of interior designers. Our issue with the bill is quite simple: as written, the definition of the scope of interior design includes the practice of architecture. Becoming a licensed architect requires much more rigorous training and experience and our concern is that the health, safety, and welfare of the public would be compromised with the passage of this legislation.

Sincerely,

Domenico Ferrante, AIA
414.588.3874

My name is Ali Kopyt. I am giving written testimony in opposition of AB320

I am have been a licensed architect in the State of Wisconsin since 2015, a managing architect at a small firm in Milwaukee, WI, and the recipient of the American Institute of Architect Wisconsin 2021 Young Architect Award. Last year I was active in lobbying against the pervious version of this bill. There have not been any significant changes to the bill from last year nor an expressed interest by the Interior Designers or their lobbyists to come to the table to discuss was to make this a viable bill.

1. There is nothing in the bill that provides for an Interior Designer to address the health, safety, and welfare of the general public, as is required by Licensed Architects. Since, interior spaces are integral to the holistic concept of a building, an untrained person can unknowingly be risking the public's safety with their work.

2. There is nothing currently impeding a professional Interior Designer from becoming a licensed design professional. The State of Wisconsin does not required an accredited degree to become a Licensed Architect. An Interior Designer can, with their degree and documented work experience, sit for the Architects Registration Exams and become a Licensed Architect with the State. This would then ensure that they abide by the same administrative code requirements and state statutes as other licensed design professionals including an Examining Board, Professional Conduct, Continuing Education in Health Safety and Welfare.

3. Interior Designers are not experiencing an imminent threat to their careers with the status quo. There is nothing pressing within this bill that it needs to pass so quickly. There is, however, and imminent threat to public safety if the bill passes as it is written. If this issue needs to be addressed, it would be worth taking the time for both sides to come together and find a common ground that works in the best interest of the general public.

4. The liability Interior Designers would need to take on by practicing architecture could be a threat to their business. It is hard to imagine a liability insurance carrier insuring an Interior Designer to stamp drawings and practice architecture when they are not registered or trained for the work. Otherwise, the Interior Designer would need to raise their rates to cover the high cost for their insurance or they would practice without insurance, putting themselves, their business, and their client at risk.

This bill is, again, being forced through without an opportunity to find common ground. I fear that this will continue to happen if a clear message isn't sent that interior design is not architecture by requiring that they strike "practice of architecture" from the bill. It is in the best interest of your constituents to oppose AB320.

Thank you.

ALI KOPYT, AIA, NCARB



[648 N Plankinton Avenue. Suite 240](#)

[Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53203](#)

Thank you, committee chair and committee members for your time this morning.

My name is Curt Hoffmann. I am an Architect, licensed to practice in Wisconsin.

I am the current President of the Milwaukee Section of the American Institute of Architects. We currently have over 800 members in Private Practice, Business, Industry, Government and Education. I previously served for three years on the National Associates Committee for the American Institute of Architects, addressing education and licensure requirements for our profession.

Assembly Bill 320, as currently written and introduced to the committee, is flawed. The language set forth in AB320 effectively short-cuts the requirements for architectural licensure for a specific group of people – interior designers. This would be an unfair advantage to that specific group, an advantage that is not given to other professions within the design and construction industry. If a person wants to legally practice architecture, it should only be achievable by going through the established, regulated, and adjudicated requirements set forth and upheld by the State of Wisconsin.

I am in full support of strengthening our industry. However, this proposed legislation could very easily have unintended consequences. Over 100 years of oversight, court cases, and precedent have shaped the current licensure requirements for architects. If passed in its current form, AB320 increases risk and legal exposure for clients, contractors, and professionals. Allowing someone who has not been required to meet the minimum threshold to become a licensed architect the ability to practice as a licensed architect could result in design deficiencies and code violations. This in turn could lead to legal claims, hardships, and cost increases to those that are party to contracts and agreements.

If a person represents themselves as a licensed architect in the State of Wisconsin, but does not hold a license, they have broken state law. The same goes for doctors, nurses, lawyers, surveyors, and many other licensed professions within our state. It would be non-sensical for the Joint Examining Board of Architects, Landscape Architects, Professional Engineers, Designers and Professional Land Surveyors to eliminate the requirements for education, examination, licensure, and continuing education for architects. Just like it would be non-sensical to ask that engineers or doctors eliminate their requirements for another interested party in their respective industry to perform the same work as them.

I urge the committee chair and committee members to vote against AB320.

As a citizen, not even particularly just as an architect, I am opposed to bill AB320 as currently drafted. As a citizen expecting the buildings I enter to be safe environments, I disagree with the bill's removal of requirements for interior design education and practical experience. I do not want to walk into a building wondering if the registered party who signed and stamped the drawings had any experience or background regarding the practice of interior design. Getting material safety, fire safety, and accessible design right is complex and requires experience, not just the ability to pass a test.

As an architect who has practiced in partnership with interior designers for many years and has appreciated the value and breadth of their skills, I still find it irresponsible to allow the language of the bill to include building code assessment, egress plans, and services that constitute the practice of architecture as part of the scope of work for interior design. Interior designers are not required to meet the same education requirements, exam requirements, or continuing education requirements as architects who are responsible for health, safety, and welfare and must maintain current knowledge regarding egress safety, fire safety, and safe material design practices.

I do believe that experienced interior designers could stamp drawings within a re-defined scope that does not include the practice of architecture and does not remove requirements for education or experience. I also believe that many of the experienced and knowledgeable interior designers I have worked with could also complete the exams to become registered architects, and then safely and under more appropriate professional liability practice within the scope of architecture.

Kimberly Reddin

[4117 Winnemac Ave](#)

[Madison, WI 53711](#)

Cell: 608-630-1240

 **Kimberly Reddin** AIA, LEED AP, WELL AP
Director of Sustainability
[D] 608-232-1360 [C] 608-630-1240

"I am a licensed architect in Wisconsin as well as in several other states. I live and work in your district. I am the owner of Ross Street Design (a women-owned firm) providing architectural and interior design services.

I am asking you to vote no on this bill. Architects and interior designers do not have the same education, experience and examination requirements. Interior designers should not be allowed to practice architecture, nor can they in the other 49 states that regulate the practice of architecture, including Wisconsin. That is the industry standard and should not change.

Specifically, I oppose the bill based on the striking of the phrase "the practice of architecture" The practice of architecture is broader than the definition of interior design and by the wording on this bill, it would expand the definition of interior design to include many of the core services in the practice of architecture. Chapter 443 of the state statutes defines architecture, landscape architecture engineering, design and land surveying in very specific terms and this bill constitutes a redefinition of rights, responsibilities, liabilities and relationships in the licensed profession. This is not an attempt to limit their practice but to clearly define the scope of interior design as it relates to other regulated professions. Architecture has been a regulated profession in Wisconsin (as well as the other 49 states) for more than a century for good reason - for the health, safety and welfare of the public.

Please vote no!"

Carol Richard

My name is Matthew Clapper and I am writing to you today to testify in opposition to AB320.

I am a WI resident, and a licensed Architect in the states of WI & IL, and I started my own firm, Modern Architecture & Development, in WI back in 2014. I am also currently the 2021 National Chair of the AIA SFx (Small Firm Exchange), which represents all small architecture firms (10 employees or less) across the country.

Currently holding this chair seat puts me in a unique position to speak to some of the tertiary issues that have been raised around the bill, in terms of it affecting women, minorities, and small business. I would like to speak to those issues first and then go into the core issues of how this bill would effect the health and safety of the general public.

Some general statistics that you may not know is that small firms make up over 75% of all architecture firms in the country. Small firms employ roughly a total of 68,000 people across the country. For comparison, the largest architecture firm, Gensler, employs 6,000 people worldwide. The large firms may grab the headlines and the big projects, but it's the small firms/businesses doing the majority of the everyday work that affects the everyday person.

To bring that closer to home, there are roughly 1,600 architects that live and work in WI and another roughly 3,200 that do work in the state but live elsewhere, for a grand total of around 5,000 architects in the state, the overwhelming majority of which will be small firms/businesses. There is also a larger percentage of minorities and women that own or work for small firms, rather than at mid/large size firms, with 50% of our AIA SFx board currently being women. According to a recent conversation with the president of NOMA (National Organization of Minority Architects) they estimate that a minimum of 60% of their members either own or work at a small firm.

I raise all of that information to drive home the point that it is often women and minorities running or working at these small firms that are doing the majority of the work that WI residents would be interacting with and hiring them for and that this bill would effect. Removing those women and minority architects from the process and replacing them with others from another profession, would at the best be a wash and at worst result in net job losses for women and minorities.

The crux of the issue though doesn't have to do with those issues, it has to do with how the practice of architecture is actually performed and how this bill will create inadvertent dangerous results if passed in its current proposed form.

Architects at their core function are problem solvers and are taught to look at a building holistically. The analogy that I like to use is that we're the equivalent of your everyday doctor, but for a building instead of a body. It is your GPs job to understand your medical history, what's unique about you, and how everything in your body interacts with everything else to always keep you safe and functioning.

That is exactly what we do for buildings and just like how GPs will call in specialists, such as a Ear/Nose/Throat doctor or neurosurgeon, etc to address specific issues or areas of the body, we do the same by calling in structural engineers, environmental consultants, **and interior designers**, to focus on certain areas of a building. Our role however is always focused on the big picture and coordination, because removing that is where things fall through the cracks and people get hurt.

I have no problem with Interior Designers wanting to be licensed and setting standards for themselves, so that not just anyone off the street can call themselves an interior designer. The only thing I object to is them wanting to push that even further and be allowed to practice architecture, all without having to do any of the additional education, training, or testing.

Interior designers only asking for certain tasks that fall under the practice of architecture may make it appear as if they aren't asking for much, but it's not about the number of specific tasks, it's about how removing architects from those tasks then affects the whole picture. Those tasks are assigned to us because they are a non-standardized task and have a holistic effect on the project.

As we discussed earlier, interior designer are specialists. They are brought in to focus on certain interior aspects and that is the narrow lens that everything is viewed through. They know prescribed life safety things, such as the heights of fire extinguishers, etc, but not the variable elements such as the egress calculations, which change every time the design is changed, and how those new calculations then effect the sprinkler systems, etc.

If you removed architects and allowed interior designers to perform tasks that fall under the practice of architecture, they'll be doing it through that same narrow lens. What may work for the area that they're focused on may cause problems in other areas of the building, which they're not involved with, but now because you've removed the architect from the process, there is no one to make all those connections between the specialists and it will result in mistakes, potentially dangerous/fatal ones.

Wisconsin has one of the most lenient Architect qualifications laws in the country. Anyone can become a WI Architect, without a degree, by just verifying they have the requisite work experience and passing the same tests. If Interior Designers want to be able to practice architecture in WI they have an incredibly open and easy way to do so, that also ensures that they will know what they're doing when they practice architecture, which this current bill doesn't do at all.

I strongly urge you to oppose this bill in its current format and require that interior designers NOT be allowed to practice architecture, without going through the already existing paths to actually become an architect and practice architecture safely. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Matthew Clapper, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP

I am a registered Architect in the State of Wisconsin and have been working in Milwaukee for a decade at two large firms employing both architects and interior designers.

We as a profession have no issue with the licensure of interior designers. Our issue with the bill is quite simple: as written, the definition of the scope of interior design includes the practice of architecture. Becoming a licensed architect requires much more rigorous training and experience and our concern is that the health, safety, and welfare of the public would be compromised with the passage of this legislation. My opposition to this bill is first and foremost about health, safety and welfare, but I am also opposed on a personal level. Allowing interior designers to practice architecture undermines the standards to which I and all other Architects have been held to as licensed professionals. I have a 4 year undergraduate degree in Art and Architectural History from UW-Madison. After graduating I worked as a historic preservation consultant for several years before realizing I still wanted to be an Architect. I understood and respected that the most expeditious path to that profession was to enroll in a 3.5 year M.Arch program for those who do not have undergraduate degrees in Architecture. I spent the next 4 years as a full-time graduate student, teaching assistant, architectural intern, husband and father of newborn twin boys. After receiving my degree I spent the next 5 years accruing the necessary experience and passing the required 7 Architectural Registration Examinations in order to call myself a licensed Architect. I accepted and embraced this difficult path because I understood and respected the standard to Architects should be held. While we take great pride in serving our clients and creating beautiful places, our oath as Architects is not all that different than that for Doctors, i.e. "first do no harm". The vast wealth of knowledge and coordination of multiple disciplines required to design spaces that first and foremost protect the health, safety and welfare of the general public is the sole issue at stake here. I work with interior designers very closely and have the utmost respect for the work they do. They are not however qualified to protect that health, safety and welfare. If they would like to be qualified, there is a path to licensure they can and should be required to pursue, just like I and so many others were required to.

Respectfully,
Jeremy Happel

Good morning,

This proposed bill is a next generation of another unsuccessful bill from last session. We came out strongly opposing the previously worded bill and had people drive from all over the state to help voice our concerns. If you would allow me, I would like to share our concerns with you for this nearly identical bill. As an architect in Madison and as a previous leader of the local chapter of AIA-Wisconsin, I OPPOSE this legislation!

There is a major lobbying organization proposing a similar bill in numerous states around the country and they have been for a number of years. It is starting to feel like big-lobbying is paying off for them, which I hate to see in Wisconsin.

I would like to share MY concerns with you:

1. I am a registered Architect and have practiced in Wisconsin for seven years. Seven years ago, we opened a new studio in Wisconsin thinking that our services would be appreciated and our knowledge of codes, safety, and the good of the public welfare were needed. This bill defies those statements and does not in any way seek to improve the good of the people. I moved my entire family from Iowa to help open an Architecture studio in Madison, as did many of my colleagues. Many of our first projects when we got into town were interior build-outs that would have been directly effected by this bill. We are a growing studio, with staff who have all invested in Wisconsin, that gives back to our communities. We are actually working on our second pro-bono project for the Boys & Girls Club of Dane County in the past two years, helping to design their future headquarters and skilled trades center. We are able to do these projects only because we were able to get our feet under us with smaller architectural projects that this bill is directed at.
2. The health, safety, and welfare of the public is at risk with this bill. Architecture has been a regulated profession in Wisconsin for more than a century. Projects in buildings over 50,000 cubic feet that involve modifications of the scope identified in the building codes should be accomplished utilizing the services of licensed professionals trained to meet the responsibilities in the existing statutes.
3. I have no issue with the licensure of interior designers. However, as written in this bill, the definition of the scope of interior design includes the practice of architecture. Becoming a licensed Architect requires a different type of rigorous training and experience and our concern is that the health, safety, and welfare of the public would be compromised with the passage of this legislation. We have offered an amendment to rectify that inclusion. We have also offered to work with the interior designers on appropriate adjustments to this bill that would not jeopardize the health, safety, and welfare of the public, but have not been responded to for multiple years.
4. In Wisconsin, a design professional required on a project can be an architect OR an engineer, yet the practice of engineering is excluded from the practice of interior design per this bill. The engineering term was removed from the bill in it's previous iteration after the interior design organization received pressure from them and was willing to work with their professional organization. This is both inconsistent and discriminatory.
5. Interior designers are also offered much more leeway in Wisconsin than in almost any other state to become licensed Architects, if they choose to do so, through already established means. In Wisconsin, there is no degree requirement that would prevent an interior designer from becoming a licensed

architect if they wanted to practice architecture. They need only to pass the examination, demonstrate the experience, and provide adequate references.

6. In Wisconsin, an architect or engineer is already NOT required for projects in buildings under the 50,000 cubic feet threshold.
7. This bill is not consistent with other states. Only two states have interior design practice laws. 28 states have some form of regulation, most being title laws, like Wisconsin has now.
8. This bill shifts the burden for creating and governing a completely new registration structure to the Department of Safety and Professional Services. Regulatory and budgetary costs to the state have not been defined.
9. Yes, the great interior designers may be able to perform this work, but we need to review this on the lowest denominator. If they want to perform architecture, they should have to follow the same steps and liabilities as we do, for the sake of the Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Public. They need to also be added to the existing examining board, provide references, have professional conduct requirements, additional continuing education requirement (HSW), etc.
10. One argument that I have heard in support of the bill is that “interior designers are women” and we need to support them. This argument is dated and no longer relevant. 50% of Architectural graduates are now female. This bill will directly impact the Architects and Architectural studios that we need most in this state: small, women, younger, newly established, and minority firms and staff. Those firms and individuals often rely on smaller projects that this bill would directly target. This bill basically takes projects from them and gives them to already established interior design firms.
11. This bill raises the requirements for entry into the interior design profession, making the profession less accessible to those pursuing a career in interior design. By having interior designers “stamp and seal” drawings, their insurance and licensing will inevitably increase; which will be passed through to clients in the end, negating their argument that they can do a project cheaper than Architects.

No one is asking for this bill, except interior designers looking to increase their business. This negatively impacts the exact Architects that we want and need to stay in this State. This bill is unnecessary, unsafe, and unwanted. Thank you for your time today.

Malorie Hepner, AIA
OPN Architects
1716 Kendall Avenue
Madison, WI 53726
608-720-8856
mhepner@opnarchitects.com

Representative Sortwell,

AIA-Wisconsin would like to thank you and members of the Assembly Committee on Regulatory Licensing Reform for holding this public hearing today. Below is a list of registered architects from across Wisconsin who are opposed to Assembly Bill 320 in its current form.

Doug Pahl	Aro Eberle	116 King Street, Suite 202, Madison, WI 53703
Allyson Nemec	Quorum Architects, Inc.	3112 W Highland Blvd, Milwaukee, WI 53208
Jim Olson	Consolidated Construction Co. Inc.	4300 N Richmond St, Appleton, WI 54913
Ed Kuharski	Green Design Studio	405 Sidney St, Madison, WI 53703
Karen Wolfert	UW Milwaukee Campus Facilities Planning	PO Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201
Jim Otto	James G. Otto Architect LLC	1374 Saint Augustine Rd, Hubertus, WI 53033
Bob Bonesho	HGA Inc.	333 E Erie St, Milwaukee, WI 53202
Karl Hokanson		388 Michael Ct, Port Washington, WI 53074
Kurt Peeters	Hoffman Planning Design & Const.Inc	122 E College Ave Ste 1G, Appleton, WI 54912
Robert Arntz	Robert J. Arntz, Architect	1300 Centennial Pkwy, Waunakee, WI 53597
Chad Ulman	Hoffman Planning Design & Const.Inc	122 E College Ave Ste 1G, Appleton, WI 54911
Andy Malanowski	Mead & Hunt, Inc.	10700 W Research Dr Ste 155, Wauwatosa, WI 53226
Keith Spruce		2306 County Road VV, Two Rivers, WI 54241
Neil McCallum		2225 Keyes Ave, Madison, WI 53711
Dave Peterson	Lien & Peterson Architects, Inc.	4675 Royal Dr, Eau Claire, WI 54701
Tom Meiklejohn	Tom W. Meiklejohn III, AIA, Architect	79 E Division St, Fond du Lac, WI 54935
Pat Frost		998 E. Circle Drive Milwaukee WI 53217
Tim Kent	Architects in Common	N9224 Mengel Hill Road Fond du Lac, WI 54937
Kelly Thompson-Frater	Thompson-Frater Architects	3 Waushara Cir, Madison, WI 53705
Brad Elund	Mead & Hunt	2440 Deming Wy, Middleton, WI 53562
Andrea Nemecek	allume architects	890 Elm Grove Rd. Suite 106 Elm Grove, WI 53122
Wesley Reynolds	OPN Architects Inc.	301 N Broom St #100, Madison, WI 53703
Sophie Anstreicher	OPN Architects Inc.	301 N Broom St #100, Madison, WI 53703
Erika Jolleys		401 Quail Drive, Raleigh, NC
Patrick Casey	Mead & Hunt	1137 Gils Way, Cross Plains, WI 53528
Marc Roehrl	UWM School of Architecture & Urban Planning [SARUP]	3007 N Farwell Ave. Milwaukee, WI 53211
Karl E. Hokanson		388 Michael Ct. Port Washington, WI 53074
David Vanden Avond	Excel Engineering	100 Camelot Drive Fond du Lac, WI 54935
Mo Zell	bauenstudio	3007 N Farwell Ave. Milwaukee, WI 53211
Mark Keane	UWM School of Architecture & Urban Planning [SARUP]	4200 N Lake Dr Shorewood, WI 53211
Linda Keane		4200 N Lake Dr Shorewood, WI 53211
Charles Quagliana	Charles Quagliana Architects	5641 Willoughby Road Mazomanie, WI 53560
James Wasley	UWM School of Architecture & Urban Planning [SARUP]	613 Sixth Street Racine, WI 53403
Mirela Zalewski	TACTICAL DESIGN NORTH	10548 N Country Club Dr. Mequon, WI 53092
Devin Kack	Plunkett-Raysich Architects	6598 N. Crestwood Drive Glendale, WI 53209

The American
Institute of Architects

AIA Wisconsin
321 S Hamilton St
Madison, WI 53703

T (608) 257-8477
www.AIAW.org

Tracey Schnick	AG Architecture	4959 State Road 144 Hartford, WI 53027
Joe Smerko	JSS Consulting	2712 Marledge St, Fitchburg WI 53711
Christopher Wenzler	Briohn Design Group	5326W32012 Depot Hill Rd Dousman, WI 53189
Jody Andres	Hoffman Planning Design & Const.Inc	510 Vassar Lane Neenah, WI 54956
Anthony J. Cook	C.R. Meyer & Sons Company	763 Bragg St. Fond du Lac, WI 54935
Mitchell Spencer		1304 Lyndale Ave Eau Claire, WI 54701
Kristin Dederling	Kohler Company	411 Summit Road Kohler, WI 53044
Kevin Timmerman	5th Avenue Design Services	504 5th Ave S. La Crosse WI 54601
Jessica Timmer	RINKA	2976 N Cramer St Milwaukee, WI 53211
Laura Davis	BWBR	406 W. Lakeview Ave. Madison, WI. 53703
Robert J. Arntz	Robert J. Arntz	1300 Centennial Parkway Waunakee, WI 53597
Brian Stoddard	Knothe & Bruce Architects	E4829 Rolling Ridge Road Spring Green, WI 53588
William Robison	Engberg Anderson Architects	320 E Buffalo, Suite 500 Milwaukee WI, 53202
Ryan Schmitz	Plunkett-Raysich Architects	5860 W. Ester Pl. Brown Deer, WI 53223
Michael Eberle	Aro Eberle	6969 Apprentice Place Middleton, WI 53562
Kimberly Reddin	FLAD	4117 Winnemac Ave Madison, WI 53711
Paula Verboomen	HGA	333 E. Erie St. Milwaukee, WI 53202
Cindy Mrozenski	UW Madison - FCM Physical Plant	UW Madison - FCM Physical Plant, Madison, WI 53706
Amy H. Molepske	Amy H. Molepske, Architect	5615 Woodland Dr. Two Rivers . WI
Eric Schoedel	Plunkett Raysich Architects	209 S Water St, Milwaukee WI 53204
Bob Shipley	BWZ Architects	100 S. Baldwin St. Ste. 306 Madison, WI 53703
Karen Wolfert	UW Milwaukee Campus Facilities Planning	3945 N. Stowell Avenue, Shorewood, WI 53211
James Whitney	City of Madison	6426 Dylun Dr. Madison, WI 53719
David Groth	EUA	6308 N Bay Ridge Avenue, Whitefish Bay, WI 53217
Jonathan Brinkley	Precedent Architecture	229 E Division St, Fond du Lac, WI
Herbert P. Jensen		9 St. Lawrence Circle Madison, WI 53717
Alan L. Evinrude	Director, Construction Services Department (Retired) Milwaukee Area Technical College	N76 W15781 Countryside Drive Menomonee Falls WI 5305:
Doug Skinner	Bray Architects Inc.	2751 North Prospect Ave Milwaukee, WI 53211
Amy Scanlon	City of Madison Planning & Development	605 S Spooner St Madison, WI 53711
Mark Zvitkovits	Short Elliott Hendrickson	N110 W15721 Catskill Lane Germantown, WI 53022
Stephen Bruns	BRUNS ARCHITECTURE	207 E Buffalo Street, #315 Milwaukee, WI 53202
Joseph Rice	Knothe & Bruce Architects LLC	2310 Waltham Rd. Madison, WI 53711
Thomas J Mrozenski	Flad Architects	405 N Bergamont Blvd Oregon WI 53575
Dan Morgan	BWBR Architects Inc.	1011 Millies Way Waunakee, WI. 53597
Tom McHugh	Tom McHugh AIA	4137 Hillcrest Drive Madison ,WI 53705
Jeff Eaton	ICONICA	901 DEMING WAY, SUITE 102 MADISON WI 53717
Joel Smullen	Marquette University	5521 North Kent Ave Whitefish Bay, WI 53217
Arlan Kay		5685 Lincoln Road Oregon, WI 53575

Michael Schaefer	PRA	2616 North 89th St. Wauwatosa, WI 53213
Michael T Franz	Kahler Slater	4550 Meadow Vw W Brookfield, WI 53005
Matthew Wiedenhoeft	MARTIN RILEY	2169 Carlton Road, Oshkosh, WI 54904
Joseph Clarke	Legacy Architecture	319 Michigan Ave. Sheboygan, WI 53081
Michael Mazmanian	City of Milwaukee - Dept of Neighborhood Services	4448 S. Austin St Milwaukee, WI 53207
Carolyn Glime	Performa Inc.	4504 Mohawk Court Green Bay, WI. 54313
Megan Scott	AG Architecture	1414 Underwood Ave - Suite 301, Wauwatosa, WI 53213
Jeff Gaard	Mead & Hunt	6767 Frank Lloyd Wright Avenue, #208 Middleton, WI 53562
Mark Keating	Gries	1840 Presidential Drive Neenah, WI 54956-9404
Thomas Hirsch	HIRSCH GROUP ARCHITECTURE	14 North Allen Street Madison WI 53726
Karl E Hokanson	No firm	388 Michael Ct Port Washington, WI 53074
Julie A. Heiberger	Hoffman Planning, Design & Construction	122 E College Ave Ste 1G, Appleton, WI 54911
STEVE HOLZHAUER	H O L Z H A U E R Partners	7450 South Avenue Middleton WI 53562
Rich Dunham	BWBR	1 S Pinckney St Ste 500, Madison WI 53703

5/18/21

Thank you Committee Chair Sortwell and the Assembly Committee on Regulatory License on Reform for your time this morning.

My name is Stacey Zwettler Keller, a Senior Project Architect at Mead & Hunt, and licensed to practice architecture in the states of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, and Kansas. I have been building my career for more than 20 years, and have been licensed for 10 years. I have many projects locally in Madison, across the state, and consult nationally on military projects. I am the current chair of AIA National's Center for Practice, AIA Wisconsin's Disaster Assistance Program and AMP Leadership Institute.

I work with Interior Designers on a regular basis. My firm has hired many of the people in this room representing this bill. I take no issue with the interior designers working toward elevating their profession. I think it's a good thing for the industry. And although we overlap on some services, just like architecture overlaps with engineering, this does not constitute the allowance for Interior Designers to Practice Architecture. As you may be aware, AIA WI has tried to negotiate with the groups supporting this bill on this issue with no avail.

With my national practice, I would like to make sure that you are aware that this bill as currently written is setting a precedent that NO OTHER STATE has set. Attached to my written testimony you will find a spreadsheet that clearly shows the limits typically placed on this type of legislation. The Practice of Architecture is almost always set in place on these other bills. If it is not specifically listed, then certain limits are placed.

This bill also writes in for Interior Designers to have their own building submittal review process, which is in direct violation of the Wisconsin Building Code. NO OTHER STATE allows Interior Designers to circumvent the established building submittal review process. The Wisconsin Building Code sets the requirements, not architects. If the allowance of interior designers to practice architecture occurs with this bill, you certainly should be requiring them to submit under the same process. Therefore, this statement that they will be able to expedite a project is just simply false.

Also many of these other states that allow Interior Designers to submit for permit hold them to the same accountability as Architects. As this bill is currently written, if there are violations or someone gets hurt, there are no repercussions.

My specialty in architecture is Historic Preservation and the renovation of buildings. The interior designers have sold some of you on the fact that this the interior of a building is just a separate, isolated item the rest of the whole building. This is just simply false, when we submit for permits of a building for just a renovation, we are required to review the whole building and the effect of the alteration on the whole building. There are three levels of alteration in Building Code, as well as preservation and change of use requirements. This bill does not even address these code items accurately. Leaving these vague terms, does not build any confidence to me that they even understand what they are asking for.

Lastly, as a female in this profession, it is insulting that the interior designers are presenting this apples and oranges issue as a way to solve diversity. I am a Girl Scout Leader, a Boy Scout Leader, a Girl Scout Gold Award Recipient, and an Athena Award winner. I was raised to believe I can achieve whatever I put my mind to. I have been raising kids to focus on STEM careers, without barriers. I was raised when you're in an elevated position, you offer a hand up. I have dedicated my volunteer architecture career to building up the next generation of women in this profession. And it's working. Nationally, our Architecture schools and colleges are now 50/50 in the gender ratios. Seventy-five percent of Architecture firms are Small Businesses and Sole Practitioners. Sixty percent of all minority architects either own or work for a small firm. This bill would undercut their ability to offer services at the same prices and essentially force small architecture firms out of the segment of the industry they rely on the most. The result would eventually be the closure of many small architecture firms at the benefit/replacement of interior design firms. This is not a diversity solution, this is simply robbing Mary to pay Karen.

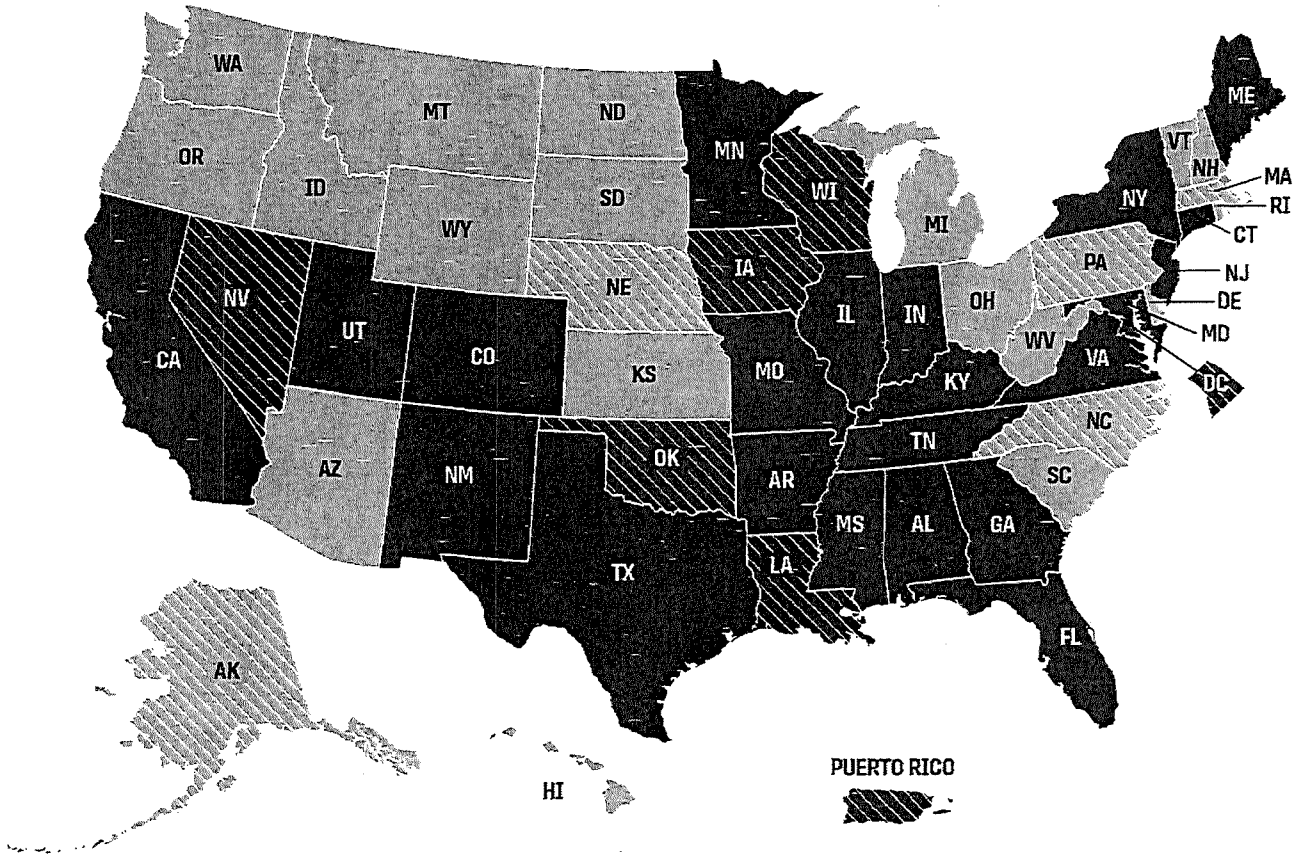
Thank you for your consideration of my testimony. If you should have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to me.

Sincerely,

Stacey Zwettler Keller
Senior Project Architect
Mead & Hunt
608-443-0590
Stacey.keller@meadhunt.com

State	Registration	Permitting Abilities	Space Limits	Type Limits	Arch Restriction	Eng Restriction	Life Safety Restrictions (Fire Walls, Egress,	Must Follow Building Code Submission Process
Wisconsin (Proposed)	Voluntary	Yes	No	No	No	Partial	No	No
Wisconsin (Current)	Voluntary	No	50,000 CF	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-
Nevada	Mandatory	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	-
DC	Mandatory	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Colorado	Exemption	Yes	No	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
Utah	Voluntary	Yes	3,000 SF	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-
Texas	Voluntary	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-
Alabama	Voluntary	Yes	5,000 SF	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Georgia	Voluntary	Yes	5,000 SF	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Florida	Voluntary	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-
Louisiana	Mandatory	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-
Massachusetts	-	No	-	-	Yes	Yes	-	-
New Mexico	Voluntary	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Minnesota	Voluntary	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-
Iowa	Voluntary	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	-
Missouri	Voluntary	No	-	-	No	Yes	-	-
Oklahoma	Voluntary	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Arkansas	Voluntary	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Illinois	Voluntary	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Indiana	Voluntary	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	-
Kentucky	Voluntary	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-
Tennessee	Voluntary	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	-
Mississippi	Voluntary	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	-
Virginia	Voluntary	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Maryland	Voluntary	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Delaware	Voluntary	No	-	-	Yes	Yes	-	-
New Jersey	Voluntary	No	-	-	No	Partial	No	Yes
New York	Voluntary	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Conneticut	Voluntary	No	5,000 SF	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Maine	Voluntary	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	-
California	Private	Limited	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

THE STATUS OF INTERIOR DESIGN LAWS IN THE UNITED STATES



- States without interior design statute
- ▨ States without interior design statute with upcoming legislation in 2021
- ▩ States with interior design statute with title distinction
- States with permitting authority
- ▩ States that require license to practice interior design





May 18, 2021

Assembly Committee on Regulatory Licensing Reform
Public Hearing: Assembly Bill 320

Representative Sortwell and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to testify today in support of Assembly Bill 320, which would streamline the regulatory structure of Wisconsin's interior design profession. The bill makes two important changes: it removes education and experience requirements from state statute, and it allows registered interior designers to "stamp" their own plans, removing an unnecessary and costly step in the current process.

Based on our prior research on occupational licensing and regulation, we believe this legislation is a step in the right direction and a good model for future reforms to the many other regulated professions in Wisconsin.

First, it removes unnecessary and repetitive requirements from state statute and instead requires that applicants for an interior design registration complete a national exam. The conditions needed to take the exam would no longer be set by the state and would therefore no longer be evaluated and approved by the Department of Safety and Professional Services, freeing up the agency to process other licenses, registrations or certifications.

This bill also eliminates the requirement that architects approve the work that registered interior designers are already trained and qualified to complete. This requirement not only adds to the total cost and time of a project, but undermines the expertise and experience of interior designers who choose to complete the optional registration. Eliminating the duplication of efforts will streamline the process of finalizing design plans and save many interior design small businesses – and their clients – both money and time.

This profession is a good example of the proper level of regulation – an optional registration – corresponding to the risk to public health and safety. As we've found through our research, over-regulating professions (often in the form of an occupational license) raises costs for consumers, increases barriers to entry, stifles innovation – often with little to no benefit to public health and safety.

The Badger Institute supports this legislation and sees it as a model for future reform. We urge the Legislature to continue looking for ways to reduce barriers to entry, safely expand scope of practice and align other state requirements for other regulated professions with national standards.

Thank you for hearing my testimony. I'm available to take any questions.

Julie Grace
Policy Analyst
Badger Institute's Center for Opportunity

Thank you committee chair and committee members for your time this morning.

My name is Andy Malanowski. I am an Architect, licensed to practice in Wisconsin, Arizona and Colorado.

For the last 6 years, have sat on the national committee that is responsible for authoring the content on the licensing exam that everyone in the United States who wants to practice Architecture must pass. For the last two years I have served as the chair of one of the exams where I supervise a team of 6 other architects from across the country who write the items.

I also am an active in helping individuals navigate the process to become licensed in their respective states. I have spoken on and been recognized at the national level for my work in that arena.

I offer up that background and experience to illustrate my deep understanding of the value of licensure, the process to become licensed and the Architects obligation to Health, Safety and Welfare. This obligation is why the profession of architecture is regulated in every state. Our ultimate allegiance is not to our clients, but every person who will ever set foot within our building, including first responders who must enter it in emergency situations.

AB320 puts the health, safety and welfare of the residents, visitors and first responders of our state at risk and amendments are required. There are several points the bill fails to address, many of which I can summarize up in one simple question.

If an Interior Designer will be allowed to practice architecture, why are they not required to follow the same rules and regulations as an Architect?

Because the bill allows Interior Designers to affect Health, Safety and Welfare (HSW) they should be subject to the same requirements as Architects and Professional Engineers, but the bill leaves out many of these requirements including:

Continuing Education: If interior designers wish to practice architecture and deal with HSW they should match the Architect's requirement of bi-annual renewal of 24 Hours, 16 of which are HSW related. Currently Interior Designers are required 9 hours of continuing education every 2 years, none of which are HSW related and this bill does not change that requirement.

Building codes change every 3 years and the science of building construction is always progressing, being up-to-date on knowledge of codes, best practices and how-to's is critical to performing this job. The current legislation would not require interior designers to receive any continued training on HSW topics such as these and I think this a huge shortfall that must be corrected.

Disciplinary Action: The bill and existing statutes provide no provisions for disciplinary action as exists for architects. There is no (and will not be any) pathway to discipline an Interior Designer who breaks the law with regards to their practice, acts unethically, or acts outside of the standard of care of her peers. This needs to be added, there needs to be a mechanism for them to be held accountable, just like an Architect or Professional Engineer.

Also not included is any stipulation on Professional conduct, such as requiring disclosure when *an interior designer is receiving a commission, compensation or anything of value for the sale of materials they specify* (a practice that is common in the Interior Design profession). In contrast, state rules governing the professional conduct of architects and professional engineers require, among other things, that clients be immediately informed of any conflicts of interest and that nothing of value may be solicited or accepted from material or equipment suppliers in return for specifying a product. This is critical that Interior Designer's be held to this same standard when people's lives are on the line.

The examples I just mentioned can be solved by providing for a section or board at the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS), this board would assist with the interpretation and enforcement of the licensing requirements. Architects and Professional Engineers are overseen by the Joint Examining Board of Architects, Landscape Architects, Professional Engineers, Designers and Professional Land Surveyors. The board reviews complaints, enforces statutory and continuing education requirements. Interior designers should have their own board created or could be added to the one that oversees Architects and Engineers.

I would like to end with a real world example. I am currently designing a facility for the National Guard. The building has one exit. A general rule of thumb for safe exiting is two exits, and the circumstances in which you can go down to one are limited and come with a laundry list of additional requirements. The design team must account for many other variables including how far it is from any point in the building to the exit, how many doors you pass through, and what, if any, other rooms you pass through, just to name a few. The item that is dictating the location of the building exit in my project? The showers in the men's locker room. This is not called out in any code book, instead it requires a thorough analysis of multiple building codes, understanding their requirements, understanding the overlaps and which one takes precedence to arrive at this conclusion.

At the end of my statement I have included a comparison between the requirement for Architects and the requirements for Interior Designers, both who will equally be practicing architecture. I hope you will take the time to review this and see the large disparities this bill will create between the professions and will vote against AB320 in its current form.

If an Interior Designer will be allowed to practice architecture, why are they not required to follow the same rules and regulations as an Architect?

Thank you for your time. I will be happy to answer any questions the committee has.

Registration Requirements

	Architects	Interior Designer (proposed)
Education	HS Diploma per 2013 Wisconsin Act 114	NCIDQ Requirements: Certificate, degree or diploma from accredited institution for 60 semester hours ⁱ
Experience	7 years* ⁱⁱ Direct supervision by an Architect is required Hours are required to be verified by an Architect *Minimum 2 years full time work under an Architect	NCIDQ Requirements: 2-4 years work experience (depending on degree) ⁱⁱⁱ
Supervised Experience?	Yes	Yes ^{iv}
Exam Content	6 exams ^v 21 hours 605 questions 22% building code related* *-required to pass exam	2 exams ^{vi} 7 hours 300 Questions 9% Building Code Related*** ***-not required to pass exam
Reciprocal Registration	Available to anyone who holds a certificate in another jurisdiction ^{vii}	Available to anyone who holds a certificate in another jurisdiction. ^{viii}
Conviction Affirmation	Yes ^{ix}	No ^x
Renewal	Rules promulgated by department	Rules promulgated by department ^{xi}
Plan Stamping	Not allowed ^{xii}	Not allowed ^{xiii}
Continuing Education Bi-Annual	24 Hours ^{xiv} 16 of which must be Health Safety Welfare Related	9 Hours ^{xv}
References for initial licensure	Five, 3 of which must be licensed	None
Disciplinary Action	Governed by 443.11 ^{xvi}	None ^{xvii}
Firm Registration	Governed by 443.08 ^{xviii}	None
Professional Conduct	Governed by A-E 8 ^{xix}	No state statute or required disclosure of conflicts of interest
Regulatory Oversight	Joint Architecture & Engineering Board ^{xx} appointed by governor & confirmed by senate 3 Professional Members 2 public members	None

ⁱ NCIDQ Examination Eligibility Paths (<https://www.cidq.org/paths>)

ⁱⁱ 443.03(1)(b)

ⁱⁱⁱ NCIDQ Examination Eligibility Paths (<https://www.cidq.org/paths>)

^{iv} NCIDQ Examination Eligibility Paths (<https://www.cidq.org/paths>)

^v NCARB Prepare for ARE 5.0

^{vi} CIDQ Exams

^{vii} 443.10(1)(b)

^{viii} Proposed 440.965

ix 443.09(2)

x Remove from proposed bill, cited as a “burdensome requirement”

xi 440.964

xii 443.17

xiii Proposed 440.9693

xiv A-E 12.03(1)

xv SPS 130.03(2)

xvi 443.11

xvii Remove from proposed bill, cited as a “burdensome requirement”

xviii 443.08

xix A-E 8.01

xx A-E 1.01