



May 27, 2021

Director Catherine M. Russell
White House Presidential Personnel Office (PPO)
1650 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20502

Re: Appointment of an NCIDQ-Certified Interior Designer to the Commission of Fine Arts

Dear Director Russell,

My name is Bryan Soukup, and I am the Vice President of Government & Public Affairs for the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) and our nearly 24,000 members, firms, and member companies. With President Biden's recent removal of several members of the Commission of Fine Arts, I write to request that the Biden Administration appoint an NCIDQ-certified interior designer to this Commission. Qualified interior designers already serve the Federal Government on the US Access Board, in agency employment, and in other facets of civil service. Appointment of an NCIDQ-certified interior designer to this Commission would be an historic moment, and would further signal the Administration's commitment to diversity in federal appointments.

The American Society of Interior Designers traces its roots back more than 80 years and serves the full range of the interior design profession and practice through the Society's programs, networks, and advocacy. Our members represent individuals of all design specialties, including workplace, healthcare, retail, hospitality, education, institutional and residential practice, students and corporate industry partners.

More than just aesthetics, interior design is a multi-faceted profession in which creative and technical solutions are applied within a structure to achieve a safe, functional, and enjoyable built interior environment. NCIDQ-certified interior designers follow a systematic and coordinated methodology including research, analysis and integration of knowledge, and application of building, accessibility, and safety codes to create spaces that enhance the quality of life and culture of their occupants.

The core of this industry is small business. 83% of interior design firms are small businesses of four or fewer employees and 80% of firms are women and/or minority-owned. Nationally, the interior design profession is more than 80% female and represents a high percentage of LGBTQ+ individuals. Appointment of an NCIDQ-certified interior designer would broaden the Commission not only from the perspective of adding another substantive professional design discipline, but also from a demographic standpoint.

As mentioned, qualified interior designers already serve the Federal Government in several ways. In May 2016, President Obama appointed Shelley Siegel, FASID, CAPS to the US Access Board. More than 200 qualified interior designers are currently employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs in order



to create safe, functional, and enjoyable spaces in which our nation's veterans heal. An appointment of an NCIDQ-qualified interior designer to the Commission of Fine Arts would be an exemplary way to continue this legacy.

ASID stands ready to assist the Biden Administration in identifying a highly qualified interior designer candidate, and I look forward to your response.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bryan J. Soukup", is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

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