

# SUPPORT the North Carolina Interior Design Act

## *The North Carolina Interior Design Act **WILL...***

### **CREATE** *Equality of Entry into the Marketplace for Interior Designers:*

North Carolina law prevents interior designers from practicing to their fullest potential and burdens interior design small businesses. Currently, interior designers do not have the ability to “**stamp and seal**” construction documents to obtain building permits for the interior design portion of a commercial construction or renovation project. Many small business interior designers must seek out another design professional with stamping authority, work under the responsible control of that design professional, allow that design professional to seal and submit those plans for permit, and, many times, pay that professional a potentially substantial fee for those services.

This cumbersome and costly system has created unnecessary expense and bureaucracy.

### **ENCOURAGE** *Lower Construction Costs & Greater Consumer Choice:*

Due to the current inability of interior designers to “stamp and seal” commercial interior design construction documents for permit, consumers must limit their choice to either an architect or an engineer for full-scale interior design services.

Consumers should have the ability to work with an interior designer and only an interior designer for all interior work within the scope of interior design practice from concept to permit to project completion. Greater choice generally means lower construction costs and fees for private and government clients.

### **PROMOTE** *Positive Economic Growth for Interior Design Jobs, Small Businesses, and Partner Industries:*

The interior design industry is an economic force within the United States. The industry reported a 9.87 billion dollar value of sales in 2015. The U.S. Census reported 66,500 interior design jobs in 2016 (13% increase since 2014) and the existence 13,176 firms nationwide. The total annual economic impact of the interior design sector in the United States is estimated to be \$96.3 billion in 2016, which can support 522,400 jobs annually. The interior design profession is **75% female**. Of interior design firms represented by ASID members, **82.4% are small businesses** of fewer than four practitioners.

Unfortunately, due to antiquated laws, the interior design industry within North Carolina is currently constrained from reaching its fullest potential.

## *The North Carolina Interior Design Act...*

- **DOES NOT** create a mandatory license. Instead, designers may choose to be voluntarily registered with the State to achieve “stamp and seal” authority within the scope of interior design practice.
- **DOES NOT** restrict any individual from referring to themselves as an interior designer or interior decorator.
- **DOES NOT** require any individual practicing interior design or decorating to become a Registered Interior Designer.
- **DOES NOT** affect any other design professional’s (architect, engineer, decorator, etc.) ability to practice his or her profession.

## *The Importance of the Interior Design profession:*

27 U.S. States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico recognize, through state law, the practice of interior design. **North Carolina does not.**

Interior designers are professionals who have acquired expertise, knowledge, and skills, through a combination of nationally-recognized post-secondary education, practical experience, and examination requirements. They create commercial interior environments that meet the requirements of their clients and the law. Interior designers design and help construct communal spaces used by the public in large numbers like hotels, convention centers, hospitals, houses of worship, and more. They have extensive knowledge of and, in many states, rigorous continuing education requirements pertaining to construction codes, standards, and regulations, and adhere to these in their work, while paying strict attention to the importance of accessibility, functionality, and client health, safety, and welfare.

### WHAT DO INTERIOR DESIGNERS DO?



#### CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

Construction management involves the coordination of all project contractors to ensure that interior spaces are built to the standards of local and national building codes, and that all project documentation and specification requirements are met. A vital and skilled part of the construction team, interior designers serve their clients by managing all project details including scheduling, payments, changes to the existing plan, potential cost increases, and more.



#### CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS

In many states, interior designers independently prepare construction documents for the client that are stamped and sealed for permit by a qualified interior designer who has completed established education requirements and successfully passed the national certification exam (the NCIDQ). After approval, these documents are used to support the work of the project's general contractor.

- Partition plans
- Reflected ceiling plans
- Power and data plans
- Finish plans
- Furniture plans
- Occupancy plans
- Fully dimensioned elevations
- Construction details
- Path of egress documents
- Building code compliance
- Engineering coordination, including electrical, mechanical, and plumbing



#### REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

In order to meet client expectations, goals, and public safety requirements and avoid legal fines and construction delays, interior designers develop project drawings that comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the International Building Code (in place in all states), and any additional codes, regulations, and federal and state laws that exist in the project location.



#### PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Interior designers further protect their government and private clients' financial and project interests by coordinating and managing additional project details.

- Budgeting and scheduling including construction, equipment, furniture, and fixtures.
- Preparation and review of bid documents with consultants and contractors.