



Board of Directors

Directory of Public Policies and Position Statements

As amended by the Board of Directors
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Introduction

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Policies and Position Statements that follow have been approved by the AIA Board of Directors and are in effect until rescinded by the Board.

Public Policies are AIA statements of belief to policy-makers, the public, and the construction industry on issues of public policy affecting the membership, the profession of architecture, or The American Institute of Architects.

Position Statements elaborate on Public Policies or apply them to specific conditions or events.

Commentaries are white papers or other analyses that amplify AIA doctrine by presenting rationale and facts to support adherence to a specific Public Policy or Position Statement.

Once approved by the Board of Directors, all AIA Public Policies and Position Statements are binding on AIA components. Specifically, the Institute's Bylaws state "no act" of an AIA component "shall directly or indirectly nullify or contravene any act or policy of the Institute."

Under certain circumstances, components may be granted exceptions to the policy conformance requirement. Rules for requesting and granting exceptions to Institute Policies may be obtained from the Office of the General Counsel.

Rules governing content, format, review, and adoption of policies and positions are contained in Chapter 9 of the AIA Rules of the Board.

Public Policies and Position Statements

“Meta” Policy

Architecture profoundly affects people. The work of architects is essential to human well being, and architects must embrace their ethical obligation to uphold this public trust.

Public Policy

As members of their communities, architects are professionally obligated to use their knowledge, skill, and experience to engage in civic life.

**Supporting
Position
Statements**

**1.
Civic
Engagement**

The AIA believes that society and the profession benefit from civically engaged architects, and components shall actively support members who wish to become civically engaged. Components shall not adopt policies that could prohibit civically engaged members from participating in component activities except to the degree such policies are required by applicable laws or regulations.
(approved May 2011)

**2.
Art and
Architecture**

The AIA supports public and private building programs that include an appropriate budget for the introduction of art integrated into the project so that it complements the architecture, when appropriate, into all project types. The integration of art should be an early and essential part of the design process, so that art can be fully coordinated with architecture. In support of this premise, the AIA recommends continued government federal funding for the arts through programs administered by the National Endowment for the Arts and other offerings funding opportunities available at the state and local levels.
(approved December 2011)

Public Policy

Design, construction, and society are constantly changing. To serve society, architects must commit to continual professional growth through learning, innovation, and exploration.

**Supporting
Position
Statements**

**3.
Mandatory
Continuing
Education**

The AIA maintains that each jurisdiction should mandate a minimum amount of continuing education for architectural licensure renewal. The American Institute of Architects further advocates that any jurisdiction considering continuing education for re-licensure accept The American Institute of Architects continuing education requirement for membership and record keeping system as a means of fulfilling the jurisdiction's requirement. *(under review to May 2012)*

**4.
Practice
Specialty
Credentialing**

The AIA considers its architect members, by virtue of their license, equipped through education, examination, and experience to capably design a wide range of project types. When it is important to clients and the public that specialized knowledge is necessary, the Institute is committed to evaluating specialty credential programs. *(under review to May 2012)*

**5.
Research and
Development**

The AIA supports the promotion of research and development of materials, technologies, and practices that advance client and user needs and improve the quality of the built environment. *(approved December 2009)*

Public Policy

The practice of architecture should be regulated. The privileges and responsibilities of practice should be extended only to those architects who demonstrate through education, experience, and examination that they are ethically and technically prepared.

**Supporting
Position
Statements**

**6.
Architectural
Practice –
Definition**

The AIA supports a uniform definition of architectural practice that delineates the scope of activities over which each jurisdiction has regulatory control. The definition should follow the recommendations developed by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards.
(approved December 2011)

**7.
Design of
Structures for
Human
Habitation or Use**

The AIA maintains that it is in the public interest for architects to design all structures primarily intended for human habitation or use. The architect's comprehensive education and training equips them to address the impact of design and technology on the health, safety, and well-being of the public and the built and natural environments. Each jurisdiction has a responsibility to its citizens to ensure that structures used or occupied by the public are designed by architects.
(under review to May 2012)

**8.
Architectural
Practice and Title
Regulations**

In the public interest, the AIA holds that only architects and engineers licensed through examination possess the necessary education, training and experience to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public in the built environment. Other individuals may possess useful skills in designing within the built environment, but fragmentation of responsible control of the building design process endangers and misleads the public as to respective areas of competence and expertise. The AIA opposes practice or title regulation of individuals or groups other than architects and engineers for the design of buildings.
(approved December 2009)

**9.
Architectural
Education
Requirements**

The AIA supports a professional degree from a National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) accredited program as the most appropriate minimum threshold for architectural education. Consideration should be given to alternative educational pathways, in lieu of a NAAB-accredited degree, as a means to fulfill educational prerequisites to licensure, on an individual candidate basis.
(approved May 2011)

- 10. Internship and Professional Development** The AIA supports a comprehensive internship with measurable qualitative training criteria. Further, the AIA supports NCARB's Intern Development Program (IDP) and its training areas, which provide interns with the diverse training and experience in architectural practice.
(approved December 2011)
- 11. Examination** The AIA maintains that passing of the Architect Registration Examination (ARE) is the only acceptable threshold for fulfillment of the examination requirement for licensure. The ARE should test for public protection competencies gained through a combination of appropriate, education and practical experience. The AIA, through its members, should encourage licensure track interns to complete the examination process at the earliest possible opportunity.
(approved May 2011)
- 12. Timing of the Architect Registration Examination (ARE)** The AIA supports architectural registration boards' allowing interns for licensure candidacy to take the ARE following their graduation from a NAAB-accredited degree program and concurrent with enrollment in the Intern Development Program (IDP).
(approved May 2011)
- 13. Use of the Title Architect and Its Derivatives** The AIA supports protecting the public by reserving the use of the term "architect" and its derivative forms to those individuals licensed as architects. In addition, the AIA supports the use of "architectural intern" or "intern architect" for graduates of NAAB-accredited degree programs.
(approved December 2011)
- 14. Licensure Board Composition** The AIA supports architectural registration boards that are composed of architects and public members who are residents of the jurisdiction. Architects should comprise a majority of the board and the terms of architectural members should be staggered. Furthermore, the AIA strongly supports the concept of single discipline boards to license architects. In situations where a single discipline board is not statutorily permitted, measures should be taken to ensure that only architects and the appropriate percentage of public members act on architectural issues.
(approved May 2011)

**15.
Enforcement of
Licensing Laws**

The AIA supports strict enforcement of architectural licensing laws by the jurisdictions and recommends that penalties be assessed for incompetent or improper practice by licensees. Unlicensed practice must be vigorously prosecuted with assessed penalties and injunctions.
(approved December 2011)

**16.
Interstate
Reciprocity and
International
Practice**

The AIA supports the use of uniform criteria for licensure that facilitate reciprocity and do not inhibit the interstate and international practice of architecture. Further, the AIA supports the global collaboration of architects, and the continued promotion of excellence in international education, practice, and design while honoring cultural diversity worldwide. The AIA supports its members' international practices through the benefits of membership and by fostering positive working relationships among architects and international architecture organizations.
(approved May 2011)

**17.
Expanding
Professional
Experience
Settings**

The AIA supports the expansion of IDP Training Settings, as defined by NCARB, to include the broad experiences in which today's interns engage and to address the expanded role that an architect can play in serving society's needs. Time requirements within settings should also be reviewed by all stakeholders.
(under review to May 2012)

**18.
Interdependence
of Education and
Practice**

The AIA supports the interdependence of practice and education as elements of the profession that, when integrated, enable students, educators, and practitioners to obtain and maintain the knowledge and skills needed to enter and fully participate in the profession, and to achieve design excellence in service to society.
(approved May 2011)

Public Policy

With an obligation to the future of the architecture profession, architects must encourage, recruit, and inspire those who would become architects.

**Supporting
Position
Statements**

**19.
Architecture
Awareness in
Education**

The AIA supports integrating the art and science of architecture into K-12 core curricula and post secondary education. Course offerings should enhance the understanding of the built environment, inspire creative and critical thinking about the importance of sustainable design and livable communities that impact quality of life.
(approved May 2011)

**20.
Mentorship**

The AIA supports its members in fulfilling their professional obligation to nurture emerging professionals as they advance throughout their career.
(approved May 2011)

**21.
Studio Culture in
Practice and
Education**

The AIA supports a professional practice environment that encourages the essential values of optimism, respect, collaboration, engagement, and innovation. The architectural design studio culture should promote these ideals as the foundation of degree education and extend these values broadly into a career in professional practice.
(approved December 2011)

Public Policy

Regulation of the construction industry shapes the built environment. As stakeholders, architects must participate in the development and application of appropriate regulations and standards.

**Supporting
Position
Statements**

**22.
Building Codes
and Standards**

The AIA supports regulation by a single set of comprehensive, coordinated, and contemporary codes and standards, which establish sound threshold values of health, safety, and the protection of the public welfare throughout the United States. To that end, the AIA espouses the development and adoption of model building codes that:

- Include participation by architects and the public in a consensus process;
- Are the product of informed education and research;
- Are without favoritism or bias to any special interest;
- Include provision for a prompt appeals procedure for all that might be aggrieved;
- Are cost-effective in relation to public benefit; and
- Promote building code provisions that set performance rather than prescriptive criteria.

(approved December 2011)

**23.
Building Permits**

The AIA supports governmental policies, regulatory procedures, and administration that eliminate unnecessary time delays in the construction permitting process.

(approved May 2011)

Public Policy

The financial health of architecture businesses is essential to the future of the profession. Architects should advocate within the law for sound business practices and compensation that reflects the architect's value to society.

**Supporting
Position
Statements**

**24.
Copyright
Protection**

The AIA supports copyright protection of the architect's design work and other intellectual property in order to prevent their unauthorized use.
(approved May 2011)

**25.
Legal Form of
Practice**

The AIA supports architectural practice within any legal structure as long as an architect retains responsible control and individual responsibility for performing architectural services. Within any legal structure the architect performing or in responsible control of the professional services must be identified and that structure must not be used to shield unlicensed practice.
(approved December 2011)

**26.
Project Delivery**

The AIA believes that project delivery processes must enhance the quality, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability of our built environment. This can best be achieved through industry-wide adoption of approaches to project delivery characterized by early and regular involvement of owners, architects, constructors, fabricators and end user/operators in an environment of effective collaboration, mutually defined goals and open information sharing. The AIA also believes that an architect is most qualified to lead design of a project and can lead a project team throughout the project delivery process.
(approved February 2011)

**27.
Qualifications
Based Selection**

The AIA supports public policies, requirements, and administrative procedures in public and private procurement processes that mandate the open selection of architects on the basis of qualifications and oppose hiring of architects on the basis of fees. Qualifications-based selection is essential to fostering quality design that serves public health and safety in the built environment.
(approved December 2011)

- 28. Affordable Health Insurance and Care** The AIA supports government policies, programs, and incentives that provide unrestricted access and choice of affordable health insurance and care for all Americans.
(sunset date extended December 2011 to May 2012)
- 29. Tax and Regulatory System** The AIA supports governmental policies, programs, and administration that promote a fair tax code and business regulations that encourage the free enterprise system and the economic well being of the American people, the U.S. construction industry, and the profession of architecture. The AIA opposes the imposition of sales taxes on professional services.
(approved May 2011)
- 30. Tort Reform** The AIA supports governmental policies and reforms to minimize lawsuit abuse and to promote the administration of a fair civil liability legal system. Society is best served by legislative and regulatory reforms that curtail the cost and risks of professional liability for architects and their clients without jeopardizing the public interest.
(approved May 2011)
- 31. Interoperability** The AIA believes that all industry-supporting software must facilitate, not inhibit, project planning, design, construction, commissioning and lifecycle management. This software must support non-proprietary, open standards for auditable information exchange and allow for confident information exchanges across applications and across time. This is best accomplished through professional, public- and private- sector adoption of open standards. The AIA encourages its members and other industry organizations to assume a leadership role in the ongoing development of open standards.
(approved December 2009)

Public Policy

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

**Supporting
Position
Statements**

**32.
Civil Rights**

The AIA supports the protection of the human dignity and self worth of all persons and calls for fair, impartial, unbiased, and non prejudicial treatment of all persons in every employment, social, and business transaction.
(under review to May 2012)

**33.
Diversity**

The AIA believes that diversity is a cultural ethos – a way of thinking or acting that fosters inclusion, enhancing our membership, our profession, and the quality of life in our communities. Embracing this culture of diversity, all programs and initiatives of the AIA and its members shall reflect the society that we serve, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, physical abilities, or religious beliefs.
(approved December 2011)

**34.
Relationship to
National Council
of Architectural
Registration
Boards (NCARB)**

The AIA will participate in the establishment of legislative standards for licensing, monitor the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) activities, and advocate the interests of the architectural profession on those issues being considered by NCARB.
(approved December 2011)

Public Policy

Architecture expresses the values of society and has the power to enhance the quality of life for this and future generations. Architects must advocate for responsible design that results in beautiful and healthy places that respect and accommodate society's diverse cultures and needs.

**Supporting
Position
Statements**

**35.
Accessible
Environment**

The AIA supports governmental policies, programs, and incentives that ensure a built environment that meets the reasonable needs of people with disabilities through accessibility rules and guidelines that are clear, certain, and consistent. Physically disabled individuals should be afforded the means to participate in society to the extent that they are able, through the elimination of physical barriers and universal design principles in a manner that balances the interests of the physically disabled and the public good.
(approved December 2011)

**36.
Housing**

The AIA believes that access to housing is a fundamental right. The AIA supports governmental policies, programs, and incentives to promote the design, construction, renovation and rehabilitation of safe, healthy, and sustainable housing within the means of all Americans.
(approved December 2011)

**37.
Livable
Communities**

The AIA believes that planning and design that integrates transportation, housing and land-use policies at the neighborhood, community and regional scales are prerequisites to the creation of safe, attractive, walkable and sustainable communities. The AIA supports governmental policies, programs and incentives that promote well-designed communities and maximize public participation in a community planning process.
(under review to May 2012)

**38.
Historic
Preservation**

The AIA supports governmental policies, programs, and incentives to preserve and rehabilitate diverse historic structures, sites, and places.
(approved May 2011)

**39.
Design
Excellence in
Publicly Funded
Projects**

The AIA supports the creation and preservation of publicly funded buildings, places, and projects of lasting significance and usefulness that represent the highest ideals of our government and its citizens.
(approved May 2011)

**40.
Government
Procurement:
Stock Plans**

The AIA maintains that society is best served by public building designs that meet the unique and specific requirements inherent in each individual project and site. The repetitive use of the same design is rarely appropriate.
(approved December 2011)

Public Policy

The creation and operation of the built environment require an investment of the earth's resources. Architects must be environmentally responsible and advocate for the sustainable use of those resources.

**Supporting
Position
Statements**

**41.
Energy and the
Built
Environment**

The AIA supports governmental policies, programs, and incentives to encourage energy conservation as it relates to the built environment as well as aggressive development and harvesting of energy from renewable sources. Architects are encouraged to promote energy efficiency and waste reduction in the built environment, encourage energy-conscious design and technology, plus support a national program for more efficient use and recycling of non-renewable resources and carbon-neutral design strategies.
(approved December 2009)

**42.
Sustainable Built
Environment**

The AIA supports governmental and private sector policy programs, and incentives to encourage a built environment that embodies the advantages of sustainable architecture.
(approved December 2011)

**43. Sustainable
Architectural
Practice**

The AIA recognizes a growing body of evidence that demonstrates current planning, design, construction, and real estate practices contribute to patterns of resource consumption that will inhibit the sustainable future of the Earth. Architects, as the leaders in design of the built environment, are responsible to act as stewards of the Earth. Consequently, we encourage communities to join with us to take the leadership to change the course of the planet's future and support legislative and regulatory strategies that implement sustainable design practices to advance the goal of achieving carbon-neutral buildings by the year 2030.
(under review to May 2012)

**44. Sustainable
Building Codes,
Standards, and
Rating Systems**

The AIA supports the development, evaluation, and use of codes, standards and evidence-based rating systems that promote the design, preservation, and construction of sustainable communities and high performance buildings.
(approved December 2009)

45. Eminent Domain

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

(approved December 2011)