



INTERIOR DESIGN – MYTHS VS. FACTS

BACKGROUND

Since Puerto Rico first passed legislation to license interior designers in the late 1970's many "myths" have developed about the purpose of interior design legislation. ASID believes that laws, regulation and legislation that allow designers who demonstrate advanced education and code knowledge to open new practice opportunities should be supported. Designers who become registered, certified or licensed do not limit others from practicing but open new areas to the entire profession. This legal process is no different from state regulations for architects, engineers, accountants or the hundreds of other professions that are subject to professional licensure regulation.

MYTHS AND FACTS

Myth: Interior design legislation puts non-registered interior designers out of business.

Fact: Interior design laws supported by ASID do not put anyone out of business, and designers may continue to perform current services regardless of any legislation. ASID-supported interior design legislation allows designers to expand into areas (e.g., stamping, signing and submitting plans for permitting) that they were barred from previously.

Myth: Interior design is a purely aesthetic talent that deals with colors, fabrics, finishes and furniture. There are no technical aspects of interior design.

Fact: Interior design is an evolving profession includes many technical aspects. Individuals working in residential settings must comply with state and local building codes. Individuals working in more heavily regulated spaces such as office, hospitality, health, education and retail must comply with building and energy codes, indoor air quality and the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements, among other health and safety issues.

Myth: There is no need to hire interior designers because architects do the same work.

Fact: Interior designers are trained to work in a specific element of the built environment — the interior space within the building envelope — and have accrued years of education, training and experience to become experts in interiors. Unlike many architects, interior design students take classes in anthropometrics, schematic interior design, furnishings and finishes, lighting and many other courses specific to interior design.

Myth: Interior design legislation, registration, certification or licensure is an attempt by national associations to create monopolies for their members.

Fact: States set the criteria for licensure of interior designers and other professions. Any individual who meets the requirements set forth by the state may become licensed. No national association has the authority to restrict or limit licensure or the authority to issue credentials.

Myth: Other professions don't have "special" laws or licensing procedures or requirements.

Fact: Most professions require testing and licensing. Some in similar professions, for example landscape architects, become certified to expand practice opportunities. Testing and licensing simply allow any designer to expand the range of services offered by affirming specific knowledge, skills and abilities.

CONTACT INFORMATION

American Society of Interior Designers
608 Massachusetts Ave., NE
Washington DC 20002
T 202.546.3480
F 202.546.3240
E gpa@asid.org

www.asid.org

ABOUT ASID: The American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) is a community of people—designers, industry representatives, educators and students—committed to interior design. Through education, knowledge sharing, advocacy, community building and outreach, the Society strives to advance the interior design profession and, in the process, to demonstrate and celebrate the power of design to positively change people's lives. Its more than 36,000 members engage in a variety of professional programs and activities through a network of 48 chapters throughout the United States and Canada. www.asid.org

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