



## Will deregulating Florida's interior design law allow **ONLY** architects to do commercial design?

**In a word. . . NO!**

With deregulation of the interior design law swiftly moving to become a reality, the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) and their in-state coalition, the Interior Design Associations Foundation (IDAF), have begun a broad-based campaign of deliberate misinformation<sup>1</sup> and scare tactics targeting students and legislators.

At issue are the recent deluge of statements from ASID/IDAF that deregulating designers will mean that only architects can do design work in commercial spaces. This is nothing more than a calculated effort by ASID/IDAF to mislead their members, the design community, legislators, and students to confuse them as to the true purpose of the bill.

- **Purpose of deregulation:** The entire purpose of deregulation is to remove barriers to entry, reduce unnecessary governmental regulations which hinder small businesses and entrepreneurs from starting or expanding their businesses, encourage new businesses to grow and hire, and provide consumer choice. No one, other than ASID/IDAF, says that the law will limit the ability of designers to work and seek jobs.
- **Definition of architecture.** What ASID/IDAF has done is take the language of the bill<sup>2</sup> regarding the definition of "architecture" and taken words out of context, while ignoring the full language of the definition, to claim that if architects are the only ones left in the architecture law, that means that no one else can do work in commercial spaces. That is:
  - not what the law says;
  - not what AIA says;
  - not what the bill sponsor says;
  - not what the Building Officials Association of Florida says;
  - not what the Florida Engineering Society says; and
  - not what is contained in the Building Official's Guide to the Professional Practice of Architects & Engineers in Florida.

Architectural services as defined by Statute 481.203(6),<sup>3</sup> and which designers may not perform unless licensed as architects, "means the rendering or offering to render services in connection with the design and construction of a structure or group of structures which have as their principal purpose human habitation or use, and the utilization of space within and surrounding such structures."

- **If deregulated, all interior designers *will* be able to practice commercial interior design, but not interior architecture.** Taken to its illogical extreme, ASID/IDAF ignores the language that sets out the parameters of the work as "the design and construction of a structure" and references only the portion that talks about utilization of space and designs and drawings. Again, it is only related to the design and construction of the structure. But since

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.idpcinfo.org/ASID\\_FL\\_Misinformation.pdf](http://www.idpcinfo.org/ASID_FL_Misinformation.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Documents/loaddoc.aspx?FileName=PCB%20BCAS%2011-01.DOCX&DocumentType=Proposed%20Committee%20Bills%20\(PCBs\)&Session=2011&CommitteeId=2604](http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Documents/loaddoc.aspx?FileName=PCB%20BCAS%2011-01.DOCX&DocumentType=Proposed%20Committee%20Bills%20(PCBs)&Session=2011&CommitteeId=2604)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&Search\\_String=&URL=0400-0499/0481/Sections/0481.203.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0400-0499/0481/Sections/0481.203.html)

designers can't do that anyway, saying that would not generate the outpouring of letters and phone calls that their campaign has generated.

IDPC, NKBA and our allies have worked with the bill sponsor and the legal counsel for the Committee to ensure that what ASID/IDAF are claiming is not accurate, and they have told us that if it helps, they would add language to the bill to make it absolutely clear that all interior designers will be able to perform the services that only registered interior designers may perform today - no one intends to limit their work or restrict commercial design to just architects. See Statute 481.203(8),<sup>4</sup> “Definition – Interior Design.”

**Serious student misinformation.** Unfortunately, impressionable students are receiving a grave injustice from their "professors" who are not telling them the truth about the profession<sup>5</sup> or the affect of deregulation,<sup>6</sup> but are pushing their own self-serving political agenda.

As Florida law currently stands now, if they want to become registered, students may only work under the supervision of a licensed interior designer or an architect or engineer. This is burdensome because:

- There are currently *only* 2560 licensed interior designers in the entire state of Florida – a 54% decrease since the law was adopted, the overwhelming majority of which were “grandfathered” at enactment and do *not* possess the qualifications they now wish to impose on everyone else.
- Where are the 2,000 design students that were testified to going to get a job upon graduation?
- How many of the 2560 licensed designers are still in business, or are not solo practitioners who don't have enough work for themselves let alone enough to hire a new designer, or who do not work for a large architecture firm and have the ability to hire a designer themselves?
- And even if they have the means, how many are in favor of training up their future competitors in such a difficult economy?
- Also note the numerous complaints from student “interns” indicating they are indentured servants, making little or no pay, and relegated to non-design related work like filing and answering phones.

**Deregulation will *help* not hurt students.** This is the inconvenient truth ignored by schools that have greatly expanded their design programs over the past few years chasing tuitions and fees, far beyond the capacity of the profession to absorb the graduates. These students are in for a rude awakening upon graduation. By allowing more businesses to work in the field, their job opportunities and ability to be hired will *increase*. Only in the hallowed halls of academia can limiting the number of businesses that can operate, especially in a down economy, increase job opportunities for graduates!

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The [Interior Design Protection Council](#) is a national, nonprofit organization whose sole mission is to protect the rights and livelihoods of all who practice interior design. See their white paper on this topic, [The Myth of the Three E's of the Interior Design Cartel](#).

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<sup>4</sup> [http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&Search\\_String=&URL=0400-0499/0481/Sections/0481.203.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0400-0499/0481/Sections/0481.203.html)

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.idpcinfo.org/IDEC\\_FSU.pdf](http://www.idpcinfo.org/IDEC_FSU.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.idpcinfo.org/IDPC\\_Response\\_to\\_FSU\\_010510.pdf](http://www.idpcinfo.org/IDPC_Response_to_FSU_010510.pdf)