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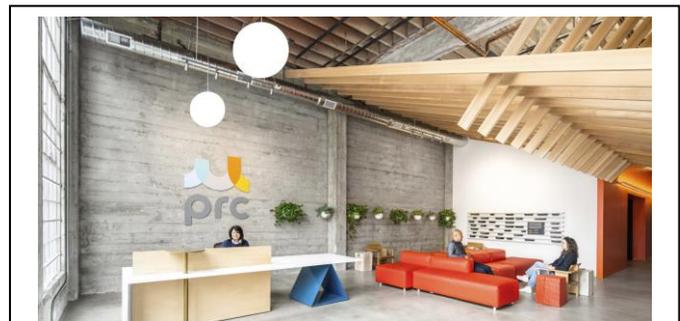


IIDA Commercial Interior Design Association Calls on California Legislators to Update Work Regulations to Reflect Critical Role of Those Who Ensure Safety and Efficacy of Public Spaces

COVID-19 Pandemic Underscores Need for Safe Public Spaces Overseen by Qualified, Certified Professionals

SAN FRANCISCO (September 28, 2021) – Did you know that California is the only state utilizing a private board to oversee interior design regulation? The [Northern](#) and [Southern](#) California chapters of IIDA (the commercial international interior design association) today recommended that a state board oversee the process. That and other joint proposals are part of IIDA’s legislative slate for critical updates to the state’s regulatory process for the commercial interior design profession. In early 2022, the Business and Professions committee of the California Legislature will undertake a sunset review of the regulation of the interior design occupation as established in 1990. The legislature originally scheduled the review in 2021 but deferred it due to the exigencies of the coronavirus pandemic.

The pandemic brought to light greater public awareness about the essential work that commercial interior designers do to ensure that public spaces are designed to support the health and well-being of the people who use and occupy them every day. Commercial interior designers conceive and create the systems and aesthetics around space usage, air quality, surfaces and access in commercial spaces that include office buildings, government buildings, entertainment venues, airports, schools and hospitals.



The [award-winning interior](#) of PRC’s headquarters in SF, designed by Gensler and Revel Design & Architecture, provides a safe, healthy multipurpose environment for the vulnerable population that the nonprofit serves.

“We know – and the pandemic has shown - that commercial interior design plays a key role in promoting the health, safety and welfare of the public. Design also has the power to heal and bring people together,” said **Verda Alexander**, president of IIDA Northern California. “California’s regulations and standards for the commercial design profession lag far behind those of other states. The upcoming sunset review is the ideal moment to bring California up to the industry standard.”

“With respect to public health, racial equity and climate change, we are living in unprecedented times,” added **Meena Krenek**, president of IIDA Southern California. “Commercial interior designers use design as a tool for championing social and environmental concerns and they represent the full diversity of

California. Their professional standing should be regulated on an equal basis with our architectural colleagues.”

Commercial interior designers are trained to identify and apply creative and technical design solutions to the interiors of commercial buildings – from offices and hospitals to restaurants and concert halls. Their goal is to understand the human experience within these spaces, and improve how people use them, while keeping the public safe and healthy. Their work must conform to local and state building and public health codes. Commercial design professionals understand these regulations and follow through to ensure compliance.

IIDA recommends the following updates to California’s professional standards:

- IIDA supports the continuation of a voluntary certification or registration for interior designers, including commercial interior designers who practice in the code-impacted environment. Due to the health, safety, and welfare impacts of commercial spaces, **the public’s best interest is served when commercial interior design is recognized and regulated.**
- IIDA advocates for commercial interior designers to be regulated by a state board. IIDA believes regulating the industry by a state board provides transparency and equity for interior designers and the public. The current regulation is overseen by a private board. California is the only state in the country utilizing a private board to oversee interior design regulation.
- IIDA submits that the qualifying exam for certified or registered commercial interior designers be the [NCIDQ](#) exam. The NCIDQ exam is the industry’s national standard, and many states require this for certification or registration. California currently requires a unique exam that is not recognized by any other state.
- IIDA argues for **commercial interior designers’ ability to stamp & seal drawings within a defined scope and for the acceptance of that stamp to be codified in state law** to ensure consistent acceptance at building departments throughout California. Currently, Certified Interior Designers do not have codified stamp and seal privileges and experience inconsistencies in various jurisdictions when submitting drawings for review across the state.
- IIDA recommends that “commercial interior designers” be included in California’s definition of “design professional,” which also includes architects, engineers, landscape architects and land surveyors. **Without this recognition, the thousands of commercial interior designers practicing in California are legally excluded,** despite their critical role working in code-impacted environments.

About IIDA

The International Interior Design Association (IIDA) chapters of Northern California and Southern California are not-for-profit philanthropic organizations that represent more than 1,000 commercial interior designers. These IIDA chapters support and promote the commercial interior design profession through education, knowledge sharing, best practices, advocacy and research. The work of commercial interior designers touches the health, safety and well-being of millions of people every day.

For information about IIDA Northern California, please visit www.iidanc.org.

For information about IIDA Southern California, please visit: <https://iida-socal.org/>.

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