Appendix B: Sample Support Letter to Legislator

January 30, 2015

[Name]
[Title]
[Street Address]
[City, State, Zip Code]

Dear Member of the House Business and Labor Committee OR Senate Business and Labor Committee:

As a professional interior designer in [YOUR STATE] and a member of the International Interior Design Association (IIDA), I urge you to support HB 126, which will appear in your committee very shortly. This non-mandatory licensing bill allows for interior designers to practice in an expanded scope of work that meets the standards of the state for specified licensed space through a combination of education, experience, and examination. Without a clear understanding of important regulations, an unqualified designer might inadvertently violate codes or even create life threatening hazards. This is why it's important to support House Bill 126.

The National Council for Interior Design Qualification (NCIDQ), which this bill supports, is an important national exam that qualified interior designers must take in order to register with the state in 26 states across the nation. I would welcome the opportunity to be able to work across state lines on projects that require such an exam in the state of Utah. I would also be thrilled to work on projects in Utah that require those qualified to work in code-impacted environments to be licensed. This provides accountability for those designers whose drawings will be used for the interior space.

The difference between qualified and unqualified interior designers impacts everyone. While many in the general public believe interior designers only select curtains, paint, and upholstery, they are mistaken. Interior Design goes beyond interior decorating. Interior designers are often responsible for making informed decisions not only about style, but also about the health, safety, and well-being of people occupying the building they're designing.

A qualified interior designer understands the relevant safety codes and practices necessary to design a safe, effective space. When designing a hospital for example, a qualified interior designer knows which type of products and finishes are flame retardant, antibacterial, and anti-microbial; which products will withstand harsh cleansers and strict sanitary protocols; and which colors and types of lighting will aid recovery, enhance healing, or help a surgeon focus while operating. When designing a residential or commercial space, a qualified interior designer will address similar issues, such as product maintenance, air quality, environmental sustainability, and aging in place.

Professional interior designers are qualified by education, experience, and examination to enhance the safety, function, and quality of interior spaces. They're trained to choose products that meet the functional needs of the end-user while understanding how those materials and systems behave in a fire, how they affect air quality, ergonomic issues, and other factors. Interior designers must make sure a space satisfies accessibility and safety requirements and applicable codes while being functional and aesthetically pleasing.

Remember, HB 126 does not require interior designers to obtain a license unless they want to work in some of the areas that currently require a registered architect. What it does, in fact, is allow interior designers who desire to expand their scope of practice to meet the standards of the state for the specified licensed space through a combination of education, experience, and examination. This expanded scope for a licensed interior designer is limited to specific types of interior spaces of already existing buildings and does not involve changing beams, columns and bearing walls. It also increases the number and type of professionals that can compete for these projects. In this bill, residential spaces remain unregulated and the term "interior designer" is not being regulated.

Thank you again for your commitment to protecting the consumers of the state of Utah and please contact me at [insert email or phone number] with any questions you might have.

Sincerely,

[Name]
[Address]