

more uniform profession nationwide, and can be used as a guideline to develop more standard and consistent laws from state to state. This standardization would allow for reciprocity between states that recognize interior design as a profession, and would make it easier for design professionals to receive certification as interior designers in more than one state.

The Model Language, like that of other professions, outlines a definition of the profession of interior design and describes services that may be offered by the registrant. In addition, it outlines the education interior designers must achieve, the examination they must pass, and the experience they must accumulate before they can perform the tasks specified in the legislative definition of services. Model Language for Interior Designers requires that interior designers use a seal and obtain sealing powers to certify technical documentation. Without those powers, interior designers would not be able to submit their documents to building authorities or other governmental agencies for issuance of building permits. The Model Language also addresses the structure and duties of a state regulatory board. In the case of Model Language for Interior Designers, where health, life, and safety concerns are paramount, the regulatory board must address registrants who may cause harm to the public through neglect or error. Therefore, the Model Language contains provisions giving the state regulatory board enforcement and disciplinary powers. As in most laws, the Model Language offers an exemption clause. Exemptions are usually offered to members of other professions who, by virtue of their education, examination, and experience, are also deemed qualified to practice in the interior design profession.

COALITIONS

There are now interior design coalitions in nearly all states, working to enact legislation or revise existing legislation. These coalitions are supported by both the ASID and IIDA through their government and regulatory affairs departments. Each coalition focuses on its state and works to establish grassroots connections in that state. Who better than residents of a state should talk to legislators about why their home state needs legislation? State coalitions were originally formed so that legislation could be approached on a local level to give state lawmakers and local constituencies a face and a name.

Coalitions have been very successful in attaining their legislative goals. They have helped to establish legislation regulating interior design in the 19 states named earlier, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico. Coalitions afford all designers the opportunity to partake in the legislative process. Among their membership they include members of interior design professional organizations, nonaffiliated interior designers, architects, and other design professionals who believe that there is a need to regulate interior design. They also believe that interior designers have a definite impact on the health and life safety of their state's citizenry.

EDUCATION

At this time, states that regulate the interior design profession require varying amounts of education for design professionals. One state has no educational requirement, while others require four- or five-year degrees. Most states, however, require at least a two-year degree. Since 1998, the NCIDQ has required that interior designers have at least a two-year degree to be eligible to sit for the examination. While some states recognize other examinations, the NCIDQ examination is the only one that has been adopted by all states and jurisdictions that have interior design legislation.

In 1968, the Interior Design Educators Council (IDEC) was founded with the primary purpose of advancing the needs of educators of interior design professionals. In 1973, FIDER was established. FIDER's primary purpose is to review and evaluate accreditation programs of interior design. FIDER accredits only undergraduate programs of interior design education. The accreditation is based on FIDER'S 12 Standards of Excellence for the Interior Design profession, as follows.

Standard 1.

- Curriculum Structure (The curriculum is structured to facilitate and advance student learning.)

Standard 2.

- Design Fundamentals (Students have a foundation in the fundamentals of art and design, theories of design and human behavior, and discipline-related history.)