

McGlynn Associates

Contract • Furniture • Representatives

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Re: Bill S2518 / H7842 – An Act Relating to Businesses and Professions: State of Rhode Island Interior Design Practice Act

Dear Honorable Members of the Senate Commerce Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for Bill S2518 / H7842: An Act Relating to Businesses and Professions – State of Rhode Island Interior Design Practice Act. I am a Manufacturer's Representative in the Contract Furniture Industry, but also have an Interior Design degree. I have been in the Interior's Industry for over 20 years.

I went back to college in my 40's to follow my passion for interior Design. Upon graduation, I worked for a local Furniture Dealership as a CAD designer and space planner. When the business closed, I went to another local dealership as a part of the sales team. After over 12 years on the furniture dealer side, I left to work for an Independent Manufacturer's Rep Group.

I have been a member of IIDA New England for over a decade and I currently hold the chair position for the local Providence City Center, which is a part of IIDA New England. I am part of a broad consortium of practitioners, educators, small business owners, and industry leaders across Rhode Island who are committed to advancing professional standards. Interior design is a distinct profession focused on the planning and design of interior environments that protect the health, safety, and welfare of occupants while supporting office interiors and office furniture. and enhance human experience.

I view this legislation as a necessary step to ensure that interior design practitioners meet the qualifications required to make critical design decisions and recommendations that impact the public.

This bill will provide interior design professionals who fulfill education, examination, and experience requirements with:

- Greater professional autonomy and equity
- The ability to stamp and seal non-structural interior construction documents • Alignment with our industry colleagues, including architects, engineers, and construction professionals

Importantly, this legislation does not restrict the practice of current design professionals.

Interior designers working in commercial, healthcare, educational, and public environments are responsible for critical aspects of the built environment that directly affect occupant safety and well-being. These responsibilities include:

- Space planning and functional design
- Accessibility compliance
- Life-safety considerations
- Adherence to building and fire codes
- Material selections affecting indoor air quality and infection control
- Design decisions that influence occupant health and overall environmental quality

Currently, 29 states, as well as Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico, have enacted legislation recognizing or regulating the profession of interior design. Within New England, Connecticut and Maine have established interior design legislation.

Passing this bill would help align Rhode Island with these jurisdictions to ensure:

- Consistent professional standards
- Stronger consumer protections
- Improved workforce mobility across state lines

This legislation affirms that qualified interior designers who meet established education, experience, and examination standards will take responsibility for code-compliant and safe interior environments. It will also provide clarity for building officials and allied professionals while supporting economic development within the design and construction industries.

As a design professional in the State of Rhode Island, I respectfully ask that you support Bill S2518 / H7842 in recognition of the important role interior designers play in protecting the public and advancing the profession.

Thank you for your service to our state. I welcome the opportunity to answer any questions or discuss this legislation further.

Sincerely,
Cynthia Bartley
A&D Representative
Associate IIDA

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