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2/18/10

The Honorable Thomas A. Colapietro
The Honorable Jim Shapiro
Co-Chairs, General Law Committee
Legislative Office Building
Room 3500
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Re: Opposition to HB 5138, Amendment to Reestablish Interior Design Regulation

Dear Senator Colapietro, Representative Shapiro and Members of the General Law Committee:

Please accept this letter to express to you my strong opposition to the amendment to the existing interior design title act and to request that you instead vote to repeal this unwarranted and unnecessary law.

Given the testimony at the Hearing from the Commissioner of the Department of Consumer Protection that the law was not enforced, the testimony from the registered interior designers who indicated that the law served no useful public purpose, and the testimony from the National Kitchen & Bath Association about the small number of registered designers who actually possess the experience and testing qualifications that the law requires, I urge you to not merely make a bad law "less bad" by correcting the constitutional defect, but instead, do away with a law that has no public benefit and is not necessary to protect the health, safety or welfare of our citizens.

The public is certainly capable of distinguishing between the qualifications of the various design professionals. There are numerous websites and private organizations like the NKBA, the American Society of Interior Designers, the International Interior Design Association and Interior Design Society that market their members' services and educate the public as to the various qualifications of designers. Each of those sites has a "find a designer" section which enables the public to view the qualifications of designers – the same qualifications that this law would require. A state registration would only duplicate these lists for no reason other than to benefit a small faction of designers and grant them a competitive marketing edge over their competitors by virtue of their "state recognition".

Given the State's substantial budget deficit, it makes no sense to continue spending state resources on a regulatory Board with its attendant cost and expense for a law that does not achieve any valid public purpose and is unnecessary given the ability of the public to determine on its own the qualifications of the designers with whom they wish to contract.

Please vote against this needless and protectionist amendment and allow me to continue to work and compete fairly on the merits of my skill and expertise. Vote to repeal this unwarranted law.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and understand my concerns. I look forward to hearing your position on this bill.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Johnson", is written over a faint, larger signature.

Kevin J. Johnson, CKD