



AIA
Virginia

Directory of Public Policies and
Position Statements

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INTRODUCTION

The Public Policies and Position Statements that follow have been approved by the AIA Virginia Board of Directors and are in effect until rescinded by the Board. They are in alignment with National AIA Public Policies and Position Statements and the principles of 2014 Virginia Accord. To the degree any Public Policies or Position Statements of AIA Virginia (or any positions taken by AIA Virginia) are inconsistent with those of the Institute, the National AIA Public Policies and Position Statements (and the conformance process stated in the Institute's Rules of the Board) will govern.

Public Policies are statements of belief to policy-makers, the public, and the construction industry on issues of public policy affecting the membership, the profession of architecture, or The American Institute of Architects.

Position Statements elaborate on Public Policies or apply them to specific conditions or events.

PUBLIC POLICIES AND POSITION STATEMENTS

“Meta” Policy

Architecture profoundly affects people. The work of architects is essential to human well-being, and architects must embrace their ethical obligation to uphold this public trust.

I. CATEGORY: THE ARCHITECT

A. Public Policy: Civic Engagement

As members of their communities, architects are professionally obligated to use their knowledge, skill, and experience to engage in civic life.

Supporting Position Statements

1. Civic Engagement

AIA Virginia believes that society and the profession benefit from civically engaged architects, and we actively support members who wish to become civically engaged. We will not adopt policies that could prohibit civically engaged members from participating in component activities except to the degree such policies are required by applicable laws or regulations.

(approved June 2017 through June 2018)

2. Art and Architecture

AIA Virginia supports public and private building programs that include an appropriate budget for the introduction of art integrated into the project so that it complements the architecture, when appropriate, into all project types. The integration of art should be an early and essential part of the design process, so that art can be fully coordinated with architecture. In support of this premise, AIA Virginia recommends continued government federal funding for the arts through programs administered by the National Endowment for the Arts and other offerings funding opportunities available at the state and local levels.

(approved June 2017 through June 2018)

B. Public Policy: Professional Development

Design, construction, and society are constantly changing. To serve society, architects must commit to continual professional growth through learning, innovation, and exploration.

Supporting Position Statements

1. Mandatory Continuing Education

AIA Virginia maintains that its jurisdiction should mandate a minimum amount of continuing education for architectural licensure renewal. AIA Virginia supports a uniform standard for HSW continuing education requirements across all jurisdictions. We further advocate that any jurisdiction considering continuing education for re-licensure accept The American Institute of Architects' continuing education requirement for membership and record-keeping system as a means of fulfilling the jurisdiction's requirement. Emeritus architects should not be required to fulfill continuing education requirements, unless they wish to resume the practice of architecture.

(approved June 2017 through June 2018)

2. Practice Specialty Credentialing

AIA Virginia considers its architect members, by virtue of their license, equipped through education, experience, and practice to capably design a wide range of project types. When it is important to clients and the public that specialized knowledge is necessary, we are committed to evaluating specialty credential programs.

(approved June 2017 through June 2018)

3. Research and Development

AIA Virginia supports the promotion of research and development of materials, technologies, and practices that advance client and user needs, maintain the protection of the public health, safety, and welfare, and improve the quality of the built environment.

(approved June 2017 through June 2018)

C. Public Policy: Regulation of Architecture

The practice of architecture should be regulated. The privileges and responsibilities of practice should be extended only to those architects who demonstrate through education, experience, and examination that they are ethically and technically prepared.

Supporting Position Statements

1. Definition of Professional Practice and Use of the Title Architect

AIA Virginia supports a uniform definition of the “practice of architecture” that delineates the scope of services a registered architect may perform as stipulated by regulatory controls of the local jurisdiction. The definition should follow the recommendations developed by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards. Furthermore, we support protecting the public by reserving the use of the term “architect” to those individuals licensed as architects. We further recommend that all jurisdictions implement a category designated as Emeritus or Retired, for persons who have held a license to practice architecture but have retired and are no longer in practice.

(approved June 2017 through June 2018)

2. Design of Structures for Human Occupancy or Use

AIA Virginia maintains that to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public, only architects should program and design all structures primarily intended for human occupancy or use. Architects are uniquely qualified through education, experience, examination, and practice to lead the design process to design buildings. The process of planning and designing the construction of buildings is complex, so sound professional judgment of an architect is needed before and throughout the design process and in construction. Therefore, it is incumbent on each jurisdiction that has a responsibility to the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens to ensure that the architect is engaged early in planning and managing the design of buildings.

(approved June 2017 through June 2018)

3. Practice and Title Regulations in the Built Environment

In the public interest, AIA Virginia holds that only architects and engineers licensed through examination possess the necessary education, training and experience to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public in the built environment. Other individuals may assist these licensed professionals in shaping the built environment, but fragmentation of responsible control of the building design process including interior architectural elements as defined by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards 2014-2015 Model Regulations 100.903, endangers and misleads the public as to respective areas of competence and expertise. The AIA generally opposes practice or title regulation of individuals or groups other than architects and engineers for the design of buildings.

(approved June 2017 through June 2018)

4. Interstate Reciprocity and International Practice for Architects

AIA Virginia supports the use of uniform criteria for licensure that facilitate reciprocity and do not inhibit the interstate and international practice of architecture. Further, we support the global collaboration of architects, and the continued promotion of excellence in international education, practice, and design while honoring cultural diversity worldwide. We support our members' international practices through the benefits of membership and by fostering positive working relationships among architects and international architecture organizations.

(approved June 2017 through June 2018)

5. Professional Licensure and Examination for Architects

AIA Virginia maintains that examination is an essential requirement for licensure. Such examination should test for public protection competencies, including health, safety, and welfare, that are gained through a combination of appropriate education and practical experience. AIA Virginia, through its members, encourages licensure-track emerging professionals to complete the examination process at their earliest practical opportunity.

AIA Virginia supports the interdependence of practice and education as elements of the profession that, when integrated, enable students, educators, and practitioners to obtain and build upon the knowledge and skills needed to enter and fully participate in the profession, and to achieve design excellence in service to society. To this end, we support architectural registration boards' allowing emerging professionals for licensure candidacy to take registration examinations following their graduation from a NAAB-accredited degree program and concurrent with enrollment in the Intern Development Program (IDP) or Architectural Experience Program (AXP).

(approved June 2017 through June 2018)

6. Architectural Education and Training Requirements

AIA Virginia supports a professional degree from a National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) accredited program as the most appropriate minimum threshold for architectural education. Consideration should be given to alternative educational pathways, in lieu of a NAAB-accredited degree, as a means to fulfill educational prerequisites to licensure, on an individual candidate basis. In addition, we support a comprehensive internship with measurable qualitative training criteria. Further, we support NCARB's Intern Development Program (IDP) or Architectural Experience Program (AXP). and its training areas, which provide emerging professionals with diverse training and experience in architectural practice.

(approved June 2017 through June 2018)

D. Public Policy: Future of the Profession

With an obligation to the future of the architecture profession, architects must encourage, recruit, and inspire those who would become architects.

Supporting Position Statements

1. Architecture Awareness in Education

AIA Virginia supports integrating the art and science of architecture into K-12 core curricula and post-secondary education. Course offerings should enhance the understanding of the built environment, and inspire creative and critical thinking about the importance of healthy buildings, sustainable design, and livable communities that positively impact quality of life.

(approved June 2017 through June 2018)

2. Mentorship

AIA Virginia supports its members in fulfilling their professional obligation to mentor emerging professionals as they advance throughout their career. Additionally, those members who supervise individuals engaged in the IDP or AXP shall reasonably assist in proper and timely documentation in accordance with that program.

(approved June 2017 through June 2018)

3. Practice and Education Cultures

AIA Virginia supports a professional practice environment (“office culture”) that encourages the essential values of optimism, respect, sharing, engagement, and innovation. The architectural design studio culture should promote these ideals as the foundation of degree education and extend these values broadly into a career in professional practice.

(approved June 2017 through June 2018)

II. CATEGORY: THE PRACTICE

A. Public Policy: Construction Industry Regulation

Regulation of the construction industry shapes the built environment. As stakeholders, architects must participate in the development and application of appropriate regulations and standards.

Supporting Position Statements

1. Building Codes and Standards

AIA Virginia supports regulation by a single set of comprehensive, coordinated, and contemporary building codes and standards that establish sound threshold values of health, safety, and the protection of the public welfare throughout the United States and abroad. To that end, AIA Virginia espouses the development and adoption of model building codes that:

- Include participation by architects and the public in a consensus process;
- Are the product of informed education and research;
- Are without favoritism or bias to any special interest;
- Include provision for a prompt appeals procedure for all that might be aggrieved;
- Are cost-effective in relation to public benefit; and
- Promote building code provisions that set performance rather than prescriptive criteria.

(approved June 2017 through June 2019)

2. Building Permits and Process

AIA Virginia supports governmental policies, regulatory procedures, and administration that eliminate unnecessary time delays in the construction permitting process; that provide transparency, consistency and predictability; and that maintain or improve health, safety and welfare requirements.

(approved June 2017 through June 2019)

3. Knowledge of Building Codes and Construction

AIA Virginia believes that knowledge of code principles and their application in building planning and design are essential parts of the necessary education and training for all architects to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public.

(approved June 2017 through June 2019)

B. Public Policy: The Business of Architecture

The financial health of architecture businesses is essential to the future of the profession. Architects should advocate within the law for sound business practices and compensation that reflects the architect's value to society.

Supporting Position Statements

1. Copyright Protection

AIA Virginia supports copyright protection of the architect's work and other intellectual property in order to prevent their unauthorized use.

(approved June 2017 through June 2019)

2. Legal Form of Practice

AIA Virginia supports architectural practice within any legal structure as long as an architect retains responsible control and individual responsibility for performing architectural services. Within any legal structure the architect performing or in responsible control of the architectural services must be identified and that structure must not be used to shield unlicensed or unlawful practice.

(approved June 2017 through June 2019)

3. Project Delivery

AIA Virginia believes collaborative project delivery processes enhance the quality, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability of our built environment. This can best be achieved through industry-wide adoption of approaches to project delivery characterized by early and consistent involvement of owners, architects, engineers, constructors, fabricators and end users in an environment of trust, fair compensation, clearly defined goals and transparency.

There are several viable project delivery models in the marketplace that promote such early collaboration. AIA Virginia believes architects are uniquely qualified and positioned to lead the development of the project and provide architectural services for all project delivery methods. Architectural services may include predesign services, project management, programming, design, construction documentation, and construction administration for building projects.

Architects have a professional and ethical responsibility to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public in all Project Delivery methods, while providing reasonable and competent design guidance to the owner and representing their best interests.

(approved June 2017 through June 2019)

4. Qualifications Based Selection

AIA Virginia supports public policies, requirements, and administrative procedures in public procurement processes that mandate the open selection of architects on the basis of qualifications and oppose hiring of architects on the basis of fees or bids. Qualifications-based selection (QBS) is essential to fostering quality design that serves health, safety, and welfare in the built environment. AIA Virginia supports best practice QBS criteria that are clear and concise, encouraging fair market competition. AIA Virginia opposes any requirements by public agencies for uncompensated design solutions as part of QBS processes.

(approved June 2017 through June 2019)

5. Tax and Regulatory System

AIA Virginia supports governmental policies, programs, and administration that promote a fair tax code and business regulations that encourage the free enterprise system and the economic well-being of the American people, the U.S. construction industry, and the profession of architecture. AIA Virginia opposes the imposition of any sales and usage taxes on professional services.

(approved June 2017 through June 2019)

6. Tort Reform

AIA Virginia supports governmental policies and reforms to minimize lawsuit abuse and to promote the administration of a fair civil liability legal system. Society is best served by legislative and regulatory reforms that curtail the cost and risks of professional liability for architects and their clients without jeopardizing the public interest.

(approved June 2017 through June 2019)

7. Software Interoperability

AIA Virginia believes that all industry-supporting software must facilitate, not inhibit, project planning, design, construction, commissioning and lifecycle management. This software must support non-proprietary, open standards for auditable information exchange and allow for confident information exchanges between different software, and between different versions of the same software. This is best accomplished through professional, public and private sector adoption of open and interoperable software standards. AIA Virginia encourages its members

and other industry organizations to assume a leadership role in the development and promulgation of open standards.

(approved June 2017 through June 2019)

8. Responsible Job Creation

AIA Virginia stands for state and local policies that help firms thrive and ensure that small firms remain strong contributors to the Commonwealth's economy. We support a state tax code that treats architects fairly, small business programs that provide loans and financing support and programs that give small firms the chance to compete. We support business practices that encourage entrepreneurship while supporting a living and contributing wage for all employees.

(approved June 2017 through June 2019)

C. Public Policy: Architects are Environmentally Responsible

The creation and operation of the built environment require an investment of the earth's resources. Architects must be environmentally responsible and advocate for the sustainable use of those resources.

1. Sustainable Architectural Practice and the Built Environment

AIA Virginia recognizes that current planning, design, construction, and real estate practices contribute to patterns of resource consumption that will inhibit the sustainable future of the Earth. Architects, as the leaders in design of the built environment, are responsible to act as stewards of the Earth. Consequently, we encourage communities to join with us in changing the course of the planet's future by supporting governmental and private sector policy programs, including the development, evaluation, and use of codes, standards and evidence-based rating systems, that promote the design, preservation, and construction of sustainable communities and high- performance buildings.

(approved June 2017 through June 2019)

2. Energy and the Built Environment

AIA Virginia supports governmental policies, programs, and incentives that encourage energy conservation as it relates to the built environment as well as the development and harvesting of energy from renewable sources. Architects are encouraged to promote energy efficiency and waste reduction in the built environment to advance the goal of achieving carbon neutral buildings by the year 2030.

(approved June 2017 through June 2019)

3. Materials and the Built Environment

AIA Virginia recognizes that building materials impact the environment and human health before, during, and after their use. Knowledge of the life-cycle impacts of building materials is integral to improving the craft, science, and art of architecture. We encourage architects to promote transparency in materials' contents and in their environmental and human health impacts.

(approved June 2017 through June 2019)

4. Resilience

Buildings and communities are subjected to destructive forces from fire, storms, earthquakes, flooding, and even intentional attack. The challenges facing the built environment are evolving with climate change, environmental degradation, and population growth. Architects have a responsibility to design a resilient environment that can more successfully adapt to natural conditions and that can more readily absorb and recover from adverse events. AIA Virginia supports policies, programs, and practices that promote adaptable and resilient buildings and communities.

(approved June 2017 through June 2019)

5. Design and Health

AIA Virginia advocates for policies, programs, research, and practices that promote health through design. Good design advances equitable access to well-being, physical activity, safety, and environmental quality, among other measurable health benefits. Working in collaboration with public health professionals and allied organizations, architects implement design solutions that inspire and facilitate healthy environments for all members of society.

(approved June 2017 through June 2019)

6. Eminent Domain

AIA Virginia recognizes that eminent domain can be a necessary tool for government to secure land for the reasonable implementation of publicly owned projects. Only under special and unique circumstances should eminent domain be used for projects that will ultimately revert to private ownership. In these circumstances, eminent domain should be considered a tool of last resort and only be applied when there is a clear and compelling public need and benefit demonstrated after an open, broad-based, and transparent community planning process. In all cases, eminent domain should be applied in ways that fairly consider the value of existing land uses and communities, while respecting citizens' rights, all community stakeholders, and community history.

(approved June 2017 through June 2019)

7. Systems of Mass Transit

Systems of mass transit can save Virginia cities and landscapes while stimulating job growth and reducing energy use. AIA Virginia supports public policies that advance new transit solutions.

(approved June 2017 through June 2019)

III. CATEGORY: THE WORLD

A. Public Policy: Architects Collaborate

Leadership in design and construction requires collaboration. Architects must encourage and celebrate the contributions of those who bring diverse experiences, views, and needs into the design process.

Supporting Position Statements

1. Civil Rights

AIA Virginia supports the promotion of human and civil rights, the universal respect for human dignity, and the unbiased treatment of all persons in employment, civic, and business transactions.

(approved June 2017 through June 2020)

2. Diversity

AIA Virginia recognizes that diversity is a cultural ethos – a way of thinking or acting that fosters inclusion and enhances our membership, our profession, and the quality of life in our communities. Embracing this culture of diversity, all programs and initiatives of the AIA and its members shall reflect the society that we serve, regardless of race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical abilities, or religious practices. AIA Virginia supports the development of policies and programs that endeavor to ensure equal access to professional degrees in architecture for those who are underrepresented in our profession.

(approved June 2017 through June 2020)

3. Relationship to National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB)

AIA Virginia will participate in the establishment of legislative standards for licensing, collaborate with the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB), and advocate the

interests of the architectural profession on those issues being considered by NCARB, including the improvement of access and conditions for those aspiring to be part of the profession.

(approved June 2017 through June 2020)

B. Public Policy: Architectural Design Matters

Architecture expresses the values of society and has the power to enhance the quality of life for this and future generations. Architects must advocate for responsible design that results in beautiful and healthy places that respect and accommodate society's diverse cultures and needs.

Supporting Position Statements

1. Accessible Environment

AIA Virginia supports governmental programs, incentives, and policies, including clear and consistent accessibility rules and guidelines that ensure a built environment that meets the reasonable needs of people with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities should be afforded the means to participate in society to the extent that they are able, through the elimination of physical barriers and through universal design principles that balance the interests of an inclusive society.

(approved June 2017 through June 2020)

2. Housing

AIA Virginia believes that access to housing is a fundamental right. We support governmental policies, programs, and incentives to promote the design, construction, renovation and rehabilitation of safe, healthy, and sustainable housing within the means of all Americans.

(approved June 2017 through June 2020)

3. Livable Communities

AIA Virginia recognizes that planning and design that integrates transportation, housing, and land-use policies at the neighborhood, community, and regional scales are prerequisites to the creation of safe, attractive, walkable, and sustainable communities. We support governmental policies, programs, and incentives that promote well-designed communities and maximize public participation in an inclusive community planning process.

(approved June 2017 through June 2020)

4. Historic Preservation

AIA Virginia supports governmental policies, programs, and incentives to preserve and rehabilitate diverse historic structures, sites, and places.

(approved June 2017 through June 2020)

5. Design Excellence in Publicly Funded Projects

AIA Virginia supports the creation and preservation of publicly funded buildings, places, and projects of lasting significance and usefulness that represent the highest ideals of citizens and their government. Society is best served by public building designs that meet the specific requirements inherent in each individual project and site.

(approved June 2017 through June 2020)