

**Proponent Testimony, House Bill 504**

**Testimony before the Ohio House Economic Development, Commerce & Labor Committee**

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**March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

Chairman Young, Vice Chairman Riedel, Ranking Minority Member Lepore-Hagan, and members of the Ohio House Economic Development, Commerce & Labor Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today in support of House Bill 504, which creates permissive certification for the Interior Design profession.

My Name is Adrienne Consales and I live here in Columbus, Ohio. I am a 2008 graduate of the CIDA accredited Interior Architecture program at Ohio University. I grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and officially made Columbus my home in November of 2010. I've held a LEED AP accreditation since 2009, which is a certificate in leadership in energy and environmental design, and I earned my NCIDQ certification in 2016 - the same year I started my design firm, Black Ink, here in Columbus. With regard to my commercial interior design projects, I focus mostly on hospitality and mixed-use projects including several local restaurants - many of which have been seen on various 'Columbus' best new restaurant' lists. I also have worked on, and continue to design, large-scale new-build interiors. A recent local project of mine, Hai Poke, received a nationwide recognition award for 'top-10 commercial projects in 2017". I've been designing commercial spaces for 8+ years and have been the project lead on 90% of my commercial projects, taking my clients from initial contract through design development and construction documents, guiding them through permitting and ultimately being there every step of the way through construction, installation and final occupancy. I am

no stranger to the Ohio Building Code and take ADA guidelines very seriously. I am fully versed and capable of drawing documentation for construction, including, but not limited to, interior sections and details, ceiling and lighting plans, framing plans, FF+E plans, as well as hand selecting everything from finishes to lighting and furniture that ultimately form the final interior aesthetic of a commercial space. I am not a 'decorator' by any means, but a professional designer of interior space who designs down to the smallest detail. My architect and contractor colleagues often lean on me to take the lead on the interiors, and that trust speaks volumes to the capabilities of professional interior designers coming from accredited backgrounds.

As a woman owned business and professional member of the design industry, I absolutely support House Bill 504. It is time that Ohio steps up to support our profession like many other states have done so already. I personally have seen and suffered the effects of not being legally 'allowed' to work within the realm of my knowledge, education, and capabilities, both as a business owner, and as a former employee of an Architecture firm. I will never apologize for the knowledge I've gained through, not only my formal education, but through the years of leading projects from design development through construction and completion. Please understand that I am a very passionate and dedicated professional who is continuously let down and frustrated by the lack of recognition afforded my profession in the State of Ohio – to be clear we have no statutory recognition in the Ohio Revised Code.

In order to be an interior design professional, many designers graduate from a rigorous Council for Interior Design Accreditation (aka CIDA) University. We are required to complete over 3,500 hours of working experience, only then to be privileged to sit for the National Council for Interior Design Qualification (or, NCIDQ) exam. Let me also be clear by stating the fact that Interior design is not interior decorating. Members of our profession are extremely qualified, highly educated and trained, and are proficient in our state's permitting laws. In addition, we are skilled in understanding our state's building codes and building standards, and more importantly, we focus on designing spaces that protect the health, safety and welfare of Ohio citizens.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, while our state's building standards have evolved over the years, Ohio's laws regarding interior design have not. We are still operating under a post war World War II era mindset. Interior design has advanced over the last few decades; however, it is still difficult to hold weight as an interior design professional in the state of Ohio. With the passage of this bill comes greater opportunity for not just the designer and client - but also the community. Clients would feel confident that the design of their space is coming from a single source that will carry them through the entire project, as opposed to the current situation where clients are passed back and forth between firms for the duration of the project. In today's environment, when there are [2+] parties involved, correction letters are passed around with many hands touching the same drawings - ultimately causing mistakes with the potential of the elimination of important details. This results in time wasted coordinating interior designer's schedules with architect's timelines, and often results in lost details and notes that impact the budgetary outcome of the space. In addition, what is most concerning to our industry, is that after an interior design professional has controlled every aspect of the process and finalizes their plans, they essentially lose control of their own intellectual property.

In summary, I believe HB 504 will not only streamline the process and create more efficiency, but also create more competition, therefore, lowering the cost for projects around the state. It is also important to note that the measure is permissive, meaning, only the interior design professional with the proper credentials that chooses to be certified will seek approval with the already established Board of Building Standards. Those interior design professionals who seek to remain in Ohio's current environment may continue to do so, either at interior design firms, or, in other professional design services.

Mr. Chairman, and members of the Ohio House Economic Development, Commerce & Labor Committee, thank you for your willingness in allowing me to testify as a proponent of House Bill 504, at this time I would be happy to answer any questions that you or the committee may have.