



**Statement of Robert D. Loversidge, FAIA**  
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**Hearing before the House Economic Development, Commerce and Labor Committee**  
**On May 22, 2018, in opposition to sub H. B. 504 of the 132nd Ohio General Assembly**  
**Regarding Interior Designers**

Thank you, Chairman Young, Vice Chairman Riedel, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagen and members of the House Economic Development, Commerce and Labor Committee. My name is Bob Loversidge. I am an architect and CEO of Schooley Caldwell, a 74-year old Ohio architectural firm best known for public works and historic preservation. I am also a member of the American Institute of Architects.

Today I am here to testify in opposition to House Bill 504, which is designed to create licensure for interior designers in our State.

My firm employs 35 architects, planners and interior designers. In addition to the 10-year renovation and restoration of our National Historic Landmark Ohio Statehouse, where we still serve as *Architect of the Capitol*, we have been responsible for design of the Thomas J. Moyer Ohio Judicial Center, renovation of the Columbus Museum of Art and the Main Library in Columbus, design of the new Michael B. Coleman Government Center, expansion and renovation of the Greater Columbus Convention Center, renovations at the Kinneary U.S. Federal Courthouse, the recent renaissance of the historic LeVeque Tower, and many other projects you might recognize. In all of these projects, interior designers played a significant role in the successful outcomes.

As an office, we value the contributions of all members of our staff, including our interior designers, and we rely on them to be experts on interiors issues. This is similar to how we work with other consultants we routinely engage, from engineers, lighting designers, acoustics experts, materials scientists, security analysts, to fine arts conservators. All of these individuals make significant contributions to what often end up being complex final projects, but only architects, engineers, and landscape architects are licensed, because the state made the determination that the services they provide directly and significantly affect public health, safety, and welfare.

The process of taking a project from initial concept to user occupancy is multi-faceted, and requires individuals -- licensed architects -- who have met the requirements set by the state through education, experience, and examination, to take responsibility for leading and coordinating all aspects and elements of a building so that they work together to fulfill the requirements of protecting public health, safety and welfare, as well as meeting the functional and aesthetic needs of our clients.



Look at this room (Statehouse Room 113), for example. When it was originally completed in 1857, it was outdoors -- a light well -- open to the sky. When my architectural firm was brought on in 1988 to renovate the building, this light well was filled with a 5-story addition. So, after we cleared away generations of changes, licensed professional engineers helped us design a new floor to create a members' lounge above us, adjacent to the House Chambers. In order to install modern heating and air conditioning ducts we had to cut large shafts through five foot thick stone walls; we had find ways to bury fire sprinkler lines and electrical conduits, and create energy efficient lighting. We brought in acoustical specialists to help design the sound systems and electronic media connections. With the help of interior designers, historians, and color specialists, we created a room layout that meets ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) and functional requirements, and designed a committee dais and period appropriate seating, color schemes, and carpets. The goal of this talented and comprehensive team, which was led and coordinated by the architect, was to reconfigure the space as a historic environment in which to conduct 21<sup>st</sup> Century government business. The architect sealed the drawings, submitted them to the State for review and permitting, and took responsibility for the result.

Dividing a project's scope and adding another layer of coordination and responsibility would not be beneficial to our clients, to the hard working code officials, or to the general public.

In conclusion, building projects are complex, and owners – as well as the public – benefit from a single, licensed entity maintaining responsibility for coordination of all aspects of the design. With the concerns raised today by many of the witnesses, and the potential negative consequences on the architecture profession in Ohio, I would respectfully ask the committee not to proceed with a vote, and to allow more time to work through the many outstanding issues still remaining.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, for allowing me to speak on this important issue. I would be pleased to address any questions you may have.