

## Substitute House Bill 504

### Proponent testimony

Dr. Mary Anne Beecher, Professor and Chairperson

Department of Design, The Ohio State University

Ohio House Economic Development, Commerce & Labor Committee

May 22, 2018

Chairman Young, Vice Chairman Riedel, and Ranking Minority Member Lepore-Hagan, and members of the Ohio House Economic Development, Commerce & Labor Committee, please accept this testimony as a resounding endorsement of Representative Pelanda's Substitute House Bill 504.

Please note that this bill has ten additional co-sponsors in the House, as well as many supporters who are represented by you—persons who recognize the significant level of technical expertise and professionalism that certified interior designers are required to exercise. The completion of an accredited professional education and the successful completion of international mechanisms for certification such as the exam provided by CIDQ (the Certification for Interior Designers) but help to ensure and acknowledge that interior designers are knowledgeable about how to design environments that support and enhance the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

Many interior designers have specialized expertise in the design of healthcare environments, workplaces, or learning spaces. They are knowledgeable about building codes, fire codes, and other relevant standards and regulations. As an interior designer who has dedicated her professional life to the education of future designers, I see moves such as the one proposed by this bill as long overdue because interior design is often misunderstood as something other than the technical and theoretically-grounded practice of creating optimized, sustainable, safe, and efficient environments that support the everyday life of all persons who enter the public sphere. I can assure you that students who study in an accredited program such as the one provided at The Ohio State University receive a rigorous education that is excellent preparation for a professional practice that is research-based, strategic, responsible, and ethical. These are the traits of a profession that is deserving of a title that is restricted in a manner that denotes its substance and professionalism, and consumers deserve to be provided with a means by which they can assess and

understand the differences among persons who, in the past, have often used the name “interior design” to mean something other than what it actually is. For instance, it is not just the selection of furniture and finishes for the purpose of decorating rooms according to their clients’ taste.

This clarification of title and acknowledgement of professional proficiency has been needed in Ohio for some time and I strongly encourage you to support Substitute House Bill 504 with your vote. It will help both your constituents who are professional interior designers and members of the public who seek their services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "M.A. Beecher". The signature is written in black ink and has a fluid, connected style.

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