



Massachusetts Federation of Building Officials

P.O. Box 1096, Lynnfield, MA 01940-3096

June 10, 2007

The Honorable Michael Morrisey and Michael Rodrigues
Joint Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Re: Senate Bill 178

Dear Representative/Senator:

The Massachusetts Federation of Building Officials (MFBO) represents over 800 municipal building officials throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Municipal building officials are charged with reviewing and approving all building construction projects in the Commonwealth and are responsible for assuring that buildings are constructed in accordance with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts State Building Code..

The MFBO is strongly opposed to Senate Bill 178. This Bill proposes to license interior designers, thereby giving them the authority to seal construction drawings. It is our opinion that this would create confusion not only in the design and construction industries, but also within municipal building departments. We believe that this confusion could pose a significant risk to public safety.

Building officials rely heavily on the knowledge and professionalism of architects and engineers when reviewing building construction drawings for permitting. We are confident that stamped drawings have been reviewed thoroughly by the licensed design professional and that those drawings are in compliance with the state building code. Senate Bill 178 would create a system by which interior designers, who are not trained or licensed to address life safety issues, also will be stamping drawings. This will create confusion on the part of the building official and can endanger public safety.

Architects and engineers are educated and trained in all aspects of the state building code. Unlike interior designers, architects and engineers are knowledgeable in the impact of their design on the overall life safety of a building. We see no compelling positive reason for the licensing of interior designers, and see only negative impacts of licensure.

MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

Building Officials of Western Massachusetts (BOWM) Southeastern Massachusetts Building Officials Association (SEMBOA)
Massachusetts Building Commissioners and Inspectors Association (MBCIA)

www.mfbo.org

We are aware that the Boston Society of Architects has proposed an alternative to licensure (House Bill 341) that would provide for certification of qualified professional interior designers. Only those who meet the standards of the law can use the term "certified interior designer." The MFBO is in support of H.B. 341. This bill would allow qualified professional interior designers to distinguish themselves from non-professionals, without creating confusion and compromising the public safety that would be inherent in the licensure of interior designers.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely Yours,



Steven R. Frederickson, P.E.
President, MFBO

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