



December 16, 2016

Statement: Recommendation from the BSA regarding the AIA Advocacy Agenda – 2017 and beyond

The American Institute of Architects, the national professional organization of 89,000 licensed American architects and the 700,000 people we employ, is dedicated to the highest standards of professionalism, integrity, and public service. We bind our members to abide by a Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct that addresses our obligations to our clients and to the public.

In addition, the AIA Board of Directors has adopted Public Policies and Position Statements which are “statements of belief on issues of public policy affecting the Membership”. They obligate us to collectively represent our core values and principles as professionals to elected and appointed policy-makers and to the general public. These policies state that:

- 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 stewarding the course of the planet’s future by supporting governmental and private sector policy programs . . . that promote the design, preservation, and construction of sustainable communities and high-performance buildings.
- As members of their communities, architects are professionally *obligated to use their knowledge, skill, and experience to engage in civic life*. The AIA 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, and sustainable communities.
- The AIA supports *the promotion of human and civil rights*, universal respect for human dignity, and the unbiased treatment of all persons in employment, civic, and business transactions. The AIA recognizes that diversity is a cultural ethos that fosters inclusion and enhances our membership, and our profession.

We ask you – our sister organizations and colleagues – to reaffirm our shared and explicitly stated core values and beliefs and to advocate on behalf of public policies that will have a positive impact on our profession, our employees, our communities, and our world. Furthermore, we ask you to reaffirm our opposition to any appointments, public policies, executive or legislative acts or regulatory initiatives that threaten these core values and principles in fundamental ways. These values include:

1. Support for the **Environmental Protection Agency’s** work to reduce environmental degradation and the production of greenhouse gasses, and the implementation of the Clean Power Plan - *to improve our nation’s air and water.*
2. Support for the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change** and the continued United States leadership in reversing threats to our planet - *to protect the world’s ecosystems and citizens.*
3. Support the Federal investment in **NASA** and **NOA’s** earth science division that produces satellite data on climate change and provides our profession and many others with critical planetary information – *to make decisions that are based on evidence.*

4. Support for the **Department of Energy's** funding of renewable energy research, the National Renewable Energy Lab, Commercial Buildings Energy Consumption Survey, Energy Star Portfolio Manager, and their partnership in the AIA 2030 Commitment - to make better use of our limited energy resources.
5. Support for the **Department of Housing and Urban Development** programs that support community development and increase access to affordable housing free from discrimination, including the HOPE VI housing revitalization grants, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), American Dream Down payment Initiative (ADDI), Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA), and Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG) - to ensure that all Americans have decent housing.
6. Support the **US Treasury Department's** Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund and the New Market Tax Credit Program and the National Park Service Federal Historic Tax Credit that spur revitalization efforts in low-income and impoverished communities – to bring every neighborhood back to life, preserve and expand traditional trades and create local jobs.
7. Support the **US Department of Transportation's** development and improvement of transit systems through the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Planning Pilot Program under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act - to ensure that Americans have the mobility they need to pursue their goals.
8. Support the **Department of Health and Human Services** programs to secure affordable health care insurance that includes women's' reproductive health care and ready access to pregnancy planning services – to ensure every citizen's right to a healthy life.
9. Support the **US Department of Labor's** protection of all employees who are temporary workers or nonimmigrant visa holders to fully enjoy the Constitutional and legal rights and benefits of our communities and our workplaces – so that everyone receives equal protection under the law.
10. Support the creation of well-paying jobs for a broad spectrum of Americans by rebuilding our infrastructure – bridges, rail lines, , water supply and drainage systems, photovoltaic and wind power generation and the associated distribution grids – harnessing the energy and ingenuity of the American people.
11. Support the 115th Congress's ratification of the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** – to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all Americans with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

We believe that these values are shared by an overwhelming number of architects and citizens, regardless where they live, the work they do, their socioeconomic status, or their race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnicity, or physical disability. With a new President beginning a four year term on January 20th, 2017, we encourage the American Institute of Architects leadership to continue to advocate for these shared values and beliefs. This advocacy may take a variety of forms:

- Provide support for any nominee or appointment whose previous experience, initiatives, and stated opinions indicate adherence to these core values, and oppose those who do not.
- Provide support for public policies, executive or legislative acts or regulatory initiatives that adhere to these core values, and oppose those that do not.

- Coordinate the efforts of local and regional AIA affiliates across the country in these advocacy efforts at local, regional, state and national levels.
- Join forces with allied professional groups across the country, labor unions, academic institutions, and governmental organizations that share our goals and values.
- Encourage our membership to understand the impact that their professional decisions have on our communities, nation and world, and leverage their work to promote the values at the core of our profession and Code of Ethics.
- Advocate for public infrastructure improvements that advance the interests of citizens and businesses by making America safer and more competitive – and ensure that there are jobs for everyone.

Thank you for providing support for these efforts, both as regional chapters, and through your efforts to implement them at the national level. We look forward to working with you to build a better world for everyone, and uphold and promote the values we share.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Josiah Stevenson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Josiah Stevenson FAIA
2017 BSA President

And the BSA Board of Directors