



AIA
Colorado

American Institute of Architects
Colorado Chapter

Directory of Public Policies and Position Statements

**As adopted by the Board of Directors
December 2017**

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I. Statement of Purpose

AIA Colorado, through its Government Affairs Committee, develops, revises and adopts public policies so that it may engage in clear and timely dialogue with elected and appointed officials regarding issues that directly impact the profession and the practice of architecture in Colorado.

The policies included herein, as well as the process of continuous reevaluation, are intended to stir engagement and to encourage members to provide personal input. This member involvement ensures that these policies continue to address the most critical issues affecting Colorado architects.

The purpose of this directory is to facilitate a mutual understanding of these critical issues, as well as our united response, and to enable AIA Colorado and its members to participate in important conversations and cultivate relationships and understanding with legislators and other stakeholders.

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II. AIA Colorado Policies and Positions

The Public Policies and Position Statements that follow have been approved by the AIA Colorado Board of Directors and are in effect until rescinded by the Board. They reflect the local and statewide public policy concerns of AIA Colorado's members, consistent with the Directory of Public Policies and Positions set forth by the American Institute of Architects. It is important to AIA Colorado's membership that this document set forth policies and positions that reflect the membership's concerns and the state of public policy affecting the design and construction industry in Colorado.

Public Policies are AIA Colorado's statements of belief to policymakers, the public, and the construction industry on issues of public policy affecting Colorado architects, their firms and our professional association. Position Statements elaborate on Public Policies and apply to specific conditions or events.

These Policies and Position Statements are meant to be updated as new issues arise or the American Institute of Architects Directory of Public Policies and Positions evolve. Once approved, however, they are binding on AIA Colorado, its local sections, and committees.

These Policies and Position Statements have been adopted consistent with the Rules and Bylaws of AIA Colorado.

(approved December 2017, through December 2019)

**A. Architectural
Licensing and
Regulation of
Practice**

To protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public, architects are licensed and regulated by all 50 states, 3 US territories, and the District of Columbia. Minimum competency to practice Architecture is established by recognized education requirements; supervised, comprehensive experience requirements; and satisfactory completion of a psychometrically rigorous national examination. Regulation and discipline of practicing architects is accomplished through the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies by a joint board for Architects, Engineers, and Land Surveyors, under the Colorado Revised Statutes (§ 12-25-301 *et. seq.* C.R.S.) and by rules and regulations established by that board.

Sunset Reviews

AIA Colorado believes that the regulation of the practice of architecture in Colorado includes a long history of satisfactory sunset reviews, and that the greatest duration permissible between sunset reviews ensures efficiency and preservation of state personnel and fiscal resources. Any changes to the Architects Practice Act deemed necessary or desirable between these sunset reviews can be efficiently accomplished through limited and targeted legislation.

Practice of Architecture

The scope of practice of architecture is defined in statute and represents those activities that require the demonstrated competency of a licensed architect so that the health, safety and welfare of the public is protected. AIA Colorado believes that other professions may be involved in designing the built environment, but that, unless these individuals demonstrate the equivalent rigor of education, experience, and examination required of architects, public safety is compromised by their performing activities within the architect's scope of practice. Those activities that are not deemed to affect the health, safety and welfare of the public do not require state licensing or regulation.

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B. Liability and Tort

All licensed architects practicing in Colorado, including AIA members, have a responsibility to perform services with the same degree of skill and care as would be expected of other reasonably competent architects under similar circumstances. AIA Colorado opposes the application of any higher standard of care to architects.

Disclosures

AIA Colorado supports legislation providing homeowners in a common interest community with all the information necessary regarding whether a construction defect or professional negligence lawsuit is in their best interest.

Alternative Dispute Resolution

AIA Colorado supports alternatives to litigating construction defect or professional negligence suits, including but not limited to mediation and arbitration.

Shotgun Lawsuits

AIA Colorado supports legislation that provides architects additional protection from unreasonable, unnecessary, and “shotgun” construction defect and professional negligence suits than that which is currently provided by Colorado’s Construction Defect Action Reform Act, § 13-20-801, et seq. C.R.S.

Certificate of Merit

AIA Colorado supports legislation requiring strict review of professional negligence lawsuits brought against architects as a pre-requisite to filing a suit.

Duty to Defend

AIA Colorado supports laws protecting architects, as part of contract negotiations, from assuming uninsurable liability or agreeing to indemnify others for negligence beyond the architect’s own.

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C. Sustainability and Resilience

Planning, design, construction, real estate development and other practices directly contribute to patterns of resource consumption, hazard exposure, economic diversity, and social resilience in Colorado communities.

Sustainable Architectural Practice

Architects, as leaders in the design of the built environment, shall act as stewards of the earth and advocates for its inhabitants. AIA Colorado encourages communities to join with our members in changing the course of the planet's future by supporting governmental and private sector programs, including development, evaluation, and use of codes, standards and evidence-based rating systems, that promote the design, preservation, and construction of sustainable communities, durable infrastructure systems, and high-performance buildings.

Natural Resource Conservation

AIA Colorado supports policies, programs, and incentives that encourage conservation of finite natural resources as it relates to the built environment, as well as the development and harvesting of energy from renewable sources. Architects are encouraged to promote compact development patterns, energy efficiency and waste reduction in the built environment, as well as on-site water treatment.

Building Materials

AIA Colorado recognizes that building materials impact the environment and human health before, during, and after their use. Understanding the life-cycle impacts of building materials is integral to improving the craft, science, and art of architecture. AIA Colorado supports transparency in material processing, contents and their environmental and human health impacts.

Environmental Resilience

Buildings and communities are subject to destructive forces from fire, storms, earthquakes, and flooding. The challenges facing the built environment are evolving with climate change, environmental degradation, and population growth. AIA Colorado believes that architects have a responsibility to design a resilient environment that can more easily adapt to natural conditions and more readily absorb and recover from adverse events.

AIA Colorado supports policies, programs, and practices that promote adaptable and resilient buildings and communities. Furthermore, we support

educational initiatives designed to help architectural practitioners and community stakeholders understand their local climate context, assess its vulnerability, and prepare for potentially catastrophic events.

Economic Resilience

The economic impact of a disaster does not depend only on the physical characteristics of the event, or its direct impact in terms of lost lives and property. The long-term economic impact of a disaster also depends on the ability of the local economy to cope, recover, reconstruct and minimize aggregate losses. AIA Colorado encourages state and local municipalities to invest in critical infrastructure and maintenance, and to develop appropriate disaster response plans. These measures will drastically reduce hazard exposure, minimize damage to the built environment, and promote economic recovery.

Social Resilience

Social resilience is derived from a communities' ability to meet residents' evolving health and social needs over the long-term. AIA Colorado supports aging in place initiatives and the creation and preservation of a built environment in which residents are empowered; have equal access to green, healthy spaces; can choose among multiple transportation options, and enjoy a high quality of life.

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**D. Governmental
Regulation of
the Built
Environment**

Building Codes and Standards

Regulation of building construction by a single set of comprehensive, coordinated, and commonly adopted building codes and standards is necessary to establish sound requirements for the protection of public health, safety and welfare. AIA Colorado supports the development and adoption of model building codes that:

- Include participation by architects and the public in a consensus process
- Are the product of standards and codes developed by the International Code Council (ICC), and as amended by the municipalities that have adopted those codes
- Are without favoritism or bias to any special interest
- Promote set performance rather than prescriptive criteria
- Promote consistency in adoption of national codes, and local codes that reference and adopt such national codes
- Encourage accountability of all parties involved, to meet the agreed upon codes and standards
- Do not conflict with each other, and provide consistency related to the health, safety and welfare of the public.

Building Permits and Process

The AIA supports policies, regulatory procedures, and administration that eliminate unnecessary delays in the construction permitting process, that provide transparency, consistency and predictability, and that maintain or improve health, safety and welfare requirements. Further, we support additional communication with state and local authorities, including training and education to provide a clear understanding of the permitting process and to allow architects to comment on the process.

Knowledge of Building Codes

AIA Colorado believes that knowledge of code principles and their application is an essential part of the education and training of an architect. That knowledge encourages a higher level of understanding of the requirements of the code and promotes consistency in the building inspection process and plan review process, while allowing the architect to preserve design intent and achieve code compliance.

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