

# **ASID RESIGNATIONS**

**-GROUP 2-**

January 16, 2009

Michael Alin, Executive Director  
The American Society of Interior Designers  
608 Massachusetts Ave., NE  
Washington, D.C., 20002

Dear Mr. Alin:

Once again Allied designers have come together to state the reasons for their dispute with ASID and to resign as a group in protest of the organization's policies and practices.

Despite the fact that ASID leadership thinks it knows better, designers who have been practicing for years understand what they do for a living and how clients react to their work. And what they know is that they are not endangering the health and safety of the public, nor are they prevented from practicing by the IBC – both simply serve as excuses for licensing.

What they also know is that licensing is totally unnecessary, and basically a device that is used by ASID and its testing partner, NCIDQ, to DISQUALIFY, not qualify, designers through legislation, and through NCIDQ requirements that cripple designers' ability not only to take the test, but to pass it as well.

Most designers have absolutely no desire and see no reason to take the NCIDQ. Nowhere has it ever been proven that designers who take it are any better than those who don't. Many of the most accomplished, famous designers in the world (notably those often featured in Architectural Digest) have never taken the test and certainly don't need to. What they have is talent, plus the ability to be creative and visionary. Techno-engineering is not what we want to study and it's not what we want to do. But this is what ASID is trying to force upon us.

We see increasing comprehension and anger from young design graduates who were fed on the milk of ASID's policies from an early age, and were uneducated as to how these policies would negatively affect their careers. They are now coming to understand how ASID's methodology will keep them from moving on up into the so-called professional ranks. NCIDQ's requirement for years of what many young designers are calling "indentured servitude" makes it impossible for anyone coming out of school to immediately take the test.

And the lack of NCIDQ-certified designers who could or would hire these young graduates into that required indentured servitude makes even the possibility of taking the test very unlikely indeed.

Many young designers have simply abandoned the desire to take the NCIDQ and are taking other roads – which is apparently another way that ASID deliberately decreases the ranks of future interior designers.

Additionally by requiring young designers to work only with NCIDQ certificate holders (few that there are) they also deny them the possibility of working with the top designers in the world who are not NCIDQ-certified.

Once again, we are appalled by the situation unfolding in Florida, which, sadly, has provided a glimpse into the real future of the meaning of design legislation.

- If it has been your goal to cut the ranks of interior designers in Florida, you have succeeded
- If it has been your goal to restrict decorators to the bare minimum of “legal” services where they would be less competitive, you have succeeded
- If it has been your goal to use the Florida practice act to cause much pain in the design community in Florida, you have succeeded
- If it has been your goal to cause Florida designers to operate in a state of fear, you have succeeded
- If it has been your goal to penalize and exact huge fines against interior designers and collateral trades just trying to do business as they were used to doing, you have succeeded
- If it has been your goal to destroy the ability to design in freedom in Florida, you have succeeded.

It is, however, *our* goal to inform designers of the type of restrictive actions heading their way if they allow ASID to pass legislation in dozens of states where legislation is slated to be introduced. And it is our goal to make sure that you never succeed in forcing this legislation on the design community, causing this type of damage to our fellow designers again.

Designers no longer feel that ASID’s dues represent a good value. In letters written by Allied members, they cited over and over again the fact that better information could be had over the internet, that Connex is worthless because of extensive censorship, that mandatory dues force people to pay for lobbying efforts they do not support, and that ASID does not do what it should to promote designers (especially Allied designers). Most agree that they can buy their own magazines, and for far less than \$440 a year!

And perhaps the most important reason of all is that clients simply don’t care whether prospective designers are members of ASID – only that they like their portfolios, feel comfortable with the designers and agree with the proposed financial arrangements.

Additionally, ASID’s claim that it promotes the interests of Allied members is particularly ludicrous since other than paying dues that support lobbying for legislation that will put us out of business, the Society seems to have no use for us. Cited over and over are the elitist attitudes that permeate leadership and chapters around the country, creating an uncomfortable and unwelcome atmosphere for Allied members who are looked upon as second-class citizens.

Just because a designer passes the NCIDQ test and serves an NCIDQ certified practitioner for a number of years, does not make that designer a professional, nor does it entitle those designers to take an elitist attitude that is unwelcoming to others within the same organization who are not NCIDQ-certified.

Professional designers are those whose vision and creativity evolve over time, and who serve their customers successfully with expertise that is derived from any number of different sources, and these professionals include people who are self-taught through their own hands-on experience. “Professional” status is something designers earn through the quality of their work in

the competitive arena of a free market – it is not something that can be conferred simply by passing a test or obtaining a government-issued license.

ASID will continue to lose members as long as it pursues professional licensing through legislation; as long as it continues to lose credibility by misrepresenting to its membership that licensing is necessary and good for the profession; as long as ASID continues to deny that licensing will put thousands of designers out of business; as long as it continues to ally with NCIDQ to disqualify designers from practice; as long as it continues its elitist attitudes; as long as it continues to mislead newcomers about their future in design; as long as it continues to deny designers who disagree with policy a voice; as long as it continues its policy of mandatory legislative assessments; and as long as it continues to promote its dictatorial policies, while denigrating its own membership.

ASID is not the organization it once was. We see that clearly, and have no desire to continue our membership.

And so we are resigning.

*Thomas M. Bauer*, #29892, Indiana

*Paula Bertucci*, #52512, California

*Denise Bressler*, #1485955, Florida

*Edith Clamen*, #42256, New York (previously resigned for above reasons)

*Diann Gibson*, #1226118, Florida

*Starr Gobtop*, 1868762, Illinois

*Amy Hart*, #1503605, Virginia

*Melodie Hunt*, #39056, Missouri

*Patrick Mallaley*, #1894927, Canada

*Carolyn McComber*, 1538456, Florida

*Nicole Mitchell*, #1527699, Pennsylvania

*Emily Nagel*, #1860696, Washington (state)

*Richard Parker*, #1480188, Florida

*Deborah A. Rodeghier*, #1485759, California

*Kelly Savell*, #1551058, Tennessee

*Janet Schmierer*, #1238256, New Jersey

*Cricket Seal*, #2440, Texas

*Mimi Swerdlow*, #1223205, Connecticut

*Margaret Vogt*, #84751, North Carolina

*Corey Zucker*, #1222704, New York

cc: Bruce J. Brigham, President

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