

Statement of Support for Regulation of ICOR Professions May 2023

The current debate regarding the role of professional licensure in the United States must include acknowledgement of the value of state licensing boards. These boards are typically made up of citizen volunteers appointed by governors who license professionals and enforce licensing rules consistent with laws passed by their legislatures and with support and guidance from state government officials. Licensing boards in each state and territory have the unique and important responsibility of protecting the public health, safety, and welfare of their citizens by establishing the standards necessary for competent practice.

The Interorganizational Council on Regulation (ICOR), comprised of the four regulatory organizations for the design professions, was formed almost two decades ago to share best practices and discuss our complementary focus on advocating on behalf of the public protection role our regulatory boards play. As nonprofit associations, membership in our organizations is comprised of these boards—whose functions include licensing and other credentialing—for architecture, engineering, interior design, landscape architecture and surveying. In many jurisdictions these professions are overseen by the same board.

*Our collective mission is to support and advocate for smart, reasonable regulation focused on protecting the public health, safety, and welfare and to facilitate licensure of qualified professionals. **As all the design professions (architecture, engineering, interior design, landscape architecture and surveying) have an impact on health, safety, and welfare in the built environment, ICOR supports the reasonable regulation of each profession to ensure public protection.***

ICOR member professions share common licensure elements as well as performing some of the same tasks. While this ‘practice overlap’ does exist, it is important to note each of these professions are unique and distinct, with a role in protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public. It is common to see these professions regulated by a multi-disciplinary board as well as having these separate professions working on the same design project. That collaboration is vital to the design process and does not diminish the individual impact that each profession has on protecting the public.

Architecture, engineering, interior design, landscape architecture and surveying professions intersect when working on buildings, the environments surrounding buildings, transportation corridors, and our nation’s infrastructure. ICOR-related professions are involved in the construction process, planning, designs, drawings, and stamping and of sealing documents, essential to obtaining building permits and other necessary approvals for construction.

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Collaboration between licensed professionals is essential to collectively protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public. A featured example are hospitals. Hospitals are complex buildings comprised of many departments that provide the myriad of services necessary for successful health outcomes. It is essential that qualified design professionals work together in creating safe environments that protect the health, safety, and welfare of patients, healthcare providers, and visitors occupying these buildings. With the increased presence of life threatening, highly communicable viruses the importance of safe, well-designed healthcare facilities has never been more important.

- **Architects** develop construction documents that include appropriate department layouts for efficient care and pathways for safe emergency evacuation.
- **Professional engineers** design systems to remove contaminated air, provide oxygen for life support and supply critical emergency power.
- **Interior designers** address accessibility requirements, specify finishes and materials to reduce slip and fall hazards, and select surface materials to minimize hospital-acquired infections.
- **Landscape architects** design comprehensive site plans including stormwater management systems, circulation of pedestrians and vehicles and areas of therapeutic landscape that positively impact patient outcomes.
- **Surveyors** identify boundaries and make sure that the design is correctly laid out on the ground.

These systems, and many more, must be carefully designed, coordinated, and integrated by qualified design professionals through a highly collaborative process to provide safe buildings.

Due to the commonalities in regulation and practice, as well as the profound impact on the public and environments, **we unequivocally support the continued licensure of architecture, engineering, interior design, landscape architecture and surveying.** At stake are billions of dollars' worth of infrastructure and site improvements every year, and the safety of persons and property these improvements affect. Oversight of these professions is essential to protecting the public's health, safety, welfare, while minimizing the risks associated with technical design professions.

Respectfully,



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