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INTERNATIONAL
INTERIOR DESIGN
ASSOCIATION

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● March 29, 2007

Letters to the Editor
The Washington Post
1150 15th Street NW
Washington Street NW
Washington, DC 20071

Dear Editor,

In response to the recent George Will column, "Wallpapering with Red Tape", I am replying on behalf of the 12,000 members of the International Interior Design Association.

The fundamental flaw in Mr. Will's article relates to his misrepresentation that interior design does not affect the public's health, safety and welfare.

The fact is the primary purpose of interior design laws is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the general public, not to qualify a designer's taste or style regardless of education or examination prerequisites for such laws. In public spaces there are over 700 fires per month which involve interior content as the first ignition point of the fire, leading to 23 deaths, and 330 injuries, and over \$399 million in direct property damage each year.

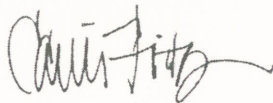
It is important to recognize that interior design affects every space you encounter in life. The difference between qualified and unqualified interior designers impacts everyone.

When designing a space in a hospital, for example, a qualified interior designer understands the relevant safety code and practices necessary to design a safe, effective space and will know which type of products and finishes are flame retardant, antibacterial and anti-microbial; which will withstand harsh cleansers and strict sanitary protocols; and which colors and types of lighting will aid recovery and enhance healing.

When designing a residential or commercial space, a qualified interior designer would address similar issues. Without a clear understanding of important regulations, an unqualified designer might inadvertently violate codes or even create life-threatening hazards.

Interior design laws set parameters for interior design professionals, as well as provide a means for the consumer to bring action against those practicing who are unqualified.

Sincerely,



Carrie L. Fitzpatrick, IIDA
IIDA Vice President of Government and Regulatory Affairs