

# Passing **HB 590**, The Interior Design Profession Act, would...

## REMOVE

### Burdensome Government Regulations on Interior Designers

North Carolina restricts interior designers from obtaining building permits for the interiors portion of a construction or renovation project. The law prohibits interior designers from signing off on plans they created and approving them. Instead, prior to handing off the plans to the contractor or owner who submits them for a permit, interior designers must first pay excessive fees to an architect who is allowed to approve them. This system has created unnecessary costs and regulatory red tape on interior design small businesses. In fact, it accounts for at least **12 percent**<sup>1</sup> of an interior design small business' annual costs! Therefore, the bill would grant interior designers the right to approve their plans.

## CREATE

### New Interior Project Opportunities for Interior Designers

The bill would also stop the government from unfairly limiting interior designers' ability to bid private sector interiors construction/renovation projects. Since interior designer-owned firms must always build in a cost to hire an architect for plan approval, they are eternally at a competitive disadvantage. If an architect-owned design firm is submitting a proposal too, **their proposal will always be less** because design plan approval is free for them. This unfair system also encourages owners or contractors to not even accept bids from interior designers. By allowing interior designers to approve their plans, the bill would ensure they are not inadvertently limited from design work in their areas.



## INCREASE

### Economic Opportunity for Women-Owned Small Businesses

The interior design profession is **90 percent** women, **75 percent** of which are small business owners. Separate from the plan approval issue, the law also restricts them from forming a business partnership with an architect. This is because only architects are allowed to be owners/partners in a business organized as a partnership that offers architectural services. Therefore, this prevents any interior designer from the economic opportunities associated with business expansion and ownership. The bill would solve this by removing these restrictions.

## PROMOTE

### Positive Growth in Interior Design Jobs and Businesses

Interior designers generate **over \$1 billion**<sup>2</sup> in economic impact for North Carolina. However, individual interior design small businesses' revenues are decreasing because of these laws. Furthermore, restrictions on plan approval and ownership of multidisciplinary design firms discourages new business start-ups by interior design students after graduation. Finally, note that **\$256 million of the \$1 billion**<sup>3</sup> is indirect impact on businesses and jobs that benefit from interior designers. Therefore, passing this bill would most certainly encourage further economic opportunity and business expansion in industries associated with interior designers.

# HB 590 DOES NOT

## Create Interior Design Licensure and Does Not...

- The bill does not restrict any individual from referencing themselves an interior designer or interior decorator. Any individual may still call themselves an interior designer or decorator.
- The bill does not restrict any individual or business from advertising that they provide interior design or interior decorating services.
- The bill does not restrict any individual or business from practicing interior design or interior decorating. Any individual or business may still practice either one.
- The bill does not require any individual practicing interior design or decorating, regardless of whether they have passed the National Council of Interior Design Qualifications (NCIDQ), to become a Registered Interior Designer. Any individual may choose if they would like to register.
- The bill does not require any individual or business to employ an interior designer, interior decorator, or Registered interior Designer to perform interior design or decorating services.



## BILL SUMMARY

The bill would grant plan approval authority to interior designers that pass the interior design industry's exam known as the NCIDQ. All states that permit this authority use this as the measurement of qualification. Verification of passage would be confirmed when an individual voluntarily registers with the Department of Insurance. Continuing education requirements are established only for individuals who are registered and seeking to renew their registration. The bill would also allow an interior designer to own a multidisciplinary design business if it's organized as a partnership.

- Defines the practice of interior design  
*Page 2, Line 28*
- Creates a voluntary registration for interior designers administered by the Department of Insurance  
*Page 3, Line 1*

- Grants plan approval authority to Registered Interior Designers  
*Page 5, Line 36 and on Pages 7 and 8*
- Guarantees there is not an impact on any individual that practices interior design or interior decorating, but does not want to voluntarily register  
*Page 7, Line 11*
- Allows interior designers the opportunity to be co-owners with an architect(s) of a business organized as a partnership that would offer interior design and architectural services  
*Page 7, Line 18*
- Creates continuing education requirements for individuals that voluntarily register in order to remain registered  
*Page 3, Line 24 and on page 4*
- Establishes disciplinary procedures for Registered Interior Designers in violation of the chapter  
*Page 4, Line 20 and on Page 5*

## QUESTIONS

If you have questions about the bill, please email them to [InteriorDesignersNC@gmail.com](mailto:InteriorDesignersNC@gmail.com). A member of the ASID and IIDA Carolinas advocacy team will follow up with you.

## TAKE ACTION

Text **InteriorDesignersNC** to the number **52886** if you want to take action and support passage of HB 590.