
Commerce & Labor Committee

HB 2513

Brief Description: Regulating interior designers.

Sponsors: Representatives Hudgins, Holmquist and Pettigrew.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes a system of registration for interior designers, and sets criteria for becoming registered.
- Allows only those who are registered to use the title interior designer; however others may practice interior design.
- Requires that design documents prepared by registered interior designers be accepted by state and local building departments as submissions for securing a building permit.

Hearing Date: 1/29/04

Staff: Susan Kavanaugh (786-7106).

Background:

Interior design is not regulated in Washington. Anyone may do interior design work and anyone may use the title interior designer.

As they are not required to register, the number of individuals who do interior design as a profession is not known for certain. A coalition of design professionals estimates there are 850 interior designers in Washington and the Department of Licensing (Department) estimates the number at 1,000 to 1,500.

Depending on the type of design services provided and the size of the project that requires a building permit, some local building officials require plans prepared by an interior designer be approved by an architect or engineer before being submitted to a state or local building department for the purpose of securing a building permit.

The National Council for Interior Design Qualification (Council), a professional organization, certifies interior designers based on examination, experience, and education.

Summary of Bill:

A system of regulation for interior designers is established in the Department and qualifications for registering as an interior designer are set.

Qualifications. To register as a interior designer, an individual must meet the following requirements:

- be certified by the Council;
- have a total of six years of work experience and formal education in interior design, of which at least two years must be formal education in the field; and
- pay the licensing fee established by the Department.

Grandfathering. Until July 1, 2006, an individual who has, before the effective date of the act, worked for 10 years as an interior designer and completed at least two years of formal education in the field may also register as an interior designer.

Reciprocity. The department may grant registration to an individual who is certified by the Council and registered or licensed by another state that has qualifications equal to those of Washington.

Continuing Education. Registered interior designers must complete 10 hours of continuing education every two years.

Restriction on Use of Title. Only registered interior designers may use the title interior designer in Washington. However, other individuals may practice interior design.

Plans Accepted For Building Permit Submissions. Plans prepared by a registered interior designer must be accepted for submissions to state and local building departments for the purpose of securing a building permit. Building departments must verify the registration of interior designers, as they do contractors.

Interior design is defined to exclude structural and seismic aspects of buildings, building systems such as plumbing and heating, and architectural and engineering design. It is stated that all elements specifically reserved for architects in statute are excluded from the definition of interior design.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.