

HOUSE No. 4453

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, February 26, 2020.

The committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure, to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 245) of Patricia A. Haddad, Elizabeth A. Poirier and others relative to registered interior designers, reports recommending that the accompanying bill (House, No. 4453) ought to pass.

For the committee,

TACKEY CHAN.

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court
(2019-2020)**

An Act relative to advancing the profession of commercial interior design.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 112 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018 Official
2 Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after section 275 the following 7 new sections:-

3 Section 276. For the purposes of this section and sections 277 to 282, inclusive, the
4 following terms shall, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, have the following
5 meanings:

6 “Board”, means the board of registration of commercial interior designers established in
7 section 110 of chapter 13.

8 "Building", means an enclosed structure that has human occupancy or habitation as its
9 principal purpose as defined in the Massachusetts State Building Code.

10 “Certificate of registration”, means the two year license to practice commercial interior
11 design issued by the board.

12 "International Building Code", means the edition of the International Building Code,
13 issued by the International Code Council, most recently adopted by the commonwealth,
14 including Massachusetts amendments.

15 "Practice of commercial interior design", means, in relation to obtaining a building
16 permit independent of an architect licensed under sections 60A through 60Q, inclusive, the
17 preparation of a plan or specification for, or the supervision of new construction, alteration, or
18 repair of, an interior space within a newly constructed or existing building when the core and
19 shell structural elements are not going to be changed; provided, however, that it does not include:
20 (a) providing commercial construction documents, independent of a licensed architect, for a
21 space that: (1) does not already have base building life safety components installed or designed
22 and permitted, including required exit stairs and enclosures, paths of travel, ramps, horizontal
23 exit passageways, disabled access, fire alarm systems, and base building fire suppression
24 systems; or (2) is undergoing a change of occupancy classification as described in the
25 International Building Code; or (b) changes to or the addition of foundations, beams, trusses,
26 columns, or other primary structural framing members or seismic systems; structural concrete
27 slabs, floor and roof framing structures, or bearing and shear walls; openings in roofs, floors,
28 exterior walls, or bearing and shear walls; exterior doors, windows, awnings, canopies,
29 sunshades, signage, or similar exterior building elements; as described in the International
30 Building Code, life safety equipment, including smoke, fire, or carbon dioxide sensors or
31 detectors, or other overhead building elements; as described in the International Building Code,
32 bracing for partial height partitions if the top of the partition is more than eight feet above the
33 floor; or heating, ventilating, or air conditioning equipment or distribution systems, building
34 management systems, high or medium voltage electrical distribution systems, standby or

35 emergency power systems or distribution systems, plumbing or plumbing distribution systems,
36 fire alarm systems, fire sprinklers systems, security or monitoring systems, or related building
37 systems.

38 Section 277. Upon approval by the board, any individual who has passed the interior
39 design examination administered by the National Council for Interior Design Qualification may
40 use the title “Registered Commercial Interior Designer.” Such individual shall, upon satisfactory
41 completion of the aforementioned requirements and any other requirements and qualifications as
42 deemed necessary by the board, send to the board a copy of documentation of the proof of
43 passage of said exam, of graduation and completion of said program, and any certifications
44 awarded to said individual by the National Council for Interior Design Qualification, and any
45 other documentation as required by the board. Such documentation shall include the individual’s
46 name, mailing address and email address; provided, that such individual shall update the board of
47 any changes to such information as they occur. Such documentation shall be placed on file with
48 the division of professional licensure.

49 Section 278. (a) Each applicant seeking to become a registered commercial interior
50 designer shall pay to the board, upon filing their original application a fee to be determined
51 annually by the commissioner of administration. After verification of the aforementioned
52 documentation and receipt of the application fee, the board shall issue a certificate of registration
53 for a period of two years. The director of the division of professional licensure, or their
54 designee, as the custodian of any documentation required by this section shall enforce the
55 provisions of said section and may use said documentation, or any lack thereof, as they, or their
56 designee, deems necessary, notwithstanding any general or special law, or rule or regulation to
57 the contrary.

58 A registered commercial interior designer shall be required to complete continuing
59 education courses. Continuing education shall be gained through coursework delivered in
60 education credits. The quantity and content designation of education credits shall be determined
61 by the board.

62 It shall be unlawful for any individual, who is not so approved by the board to use the
63 title “Registered Commercial Interior Designer” or any title or device indicating that an
64 individual is a “registered commercial interior designer.”

65 Nothing herein shall prohibit any person from performing commercial interior design
66 services or using the title “commercial interior designer”, “commercial interiors consultant”,
67 “commercial interior decorator” or the like, so long as the word “registered” is not used in
68 conjunction with the word “commercial interior designer.”

69 Nothing herein shall authorize any individual to engage in the practice of architecture,
70 engineering, or any other occupation regulated under the laws of this state or to prepare, sign or
71 seal plans with respect to such practice or in connection with any governmental permits unless
72 licensed or otherwise permitted to do so under such laws.

73 Nothing in this section shall prohibit an employee of a retail establishment providing
74 consultation regarding interior design, decoration, furnishings, furniture or fixtures offered for
75 sale by such establishment from receiving compensation from such establishment.

76 (b) Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, an individual who has
77 completed at least 10 years of full-time, diversified, verifiable professional experience in the
78 profession of interior design shall be eligible for provisional registration provided that within 12
79 months after the first meeting of the board, said individual has applied for registration.

80 Said applicant, upon review and consent of the board, may be issued a provisional
81 registration and be given three calendar years from the first meeting of the board to provide
82 substantial proof to the board of successful passage of the National Council for Interior Design
83 Qualification examination, at which time full registration will be granted. If proof is not provided
84 to the board within the allotted time period, said applicant's provisional registration shall be
85 revoked. Re-application, including satisfaction of all requirements at the time of re-application,
86 shall be required for registration. During the time period of provisional registration said
87 individual is required to maintain all current fees and uphold all requirements registration and
88 renewal until such time as the examination requirement is fulfilled.

89 (c) Any individual violating the provisions of sections 276 to 282, inclusive, may be
90 punished by a fine of not more than \$500 or by imprisonment in a jail or house of correction for
91 not more than 3 months, or both, or by revocation of registration by the board.

92 Section 279. Every registered commercial interior designer shall have a seal of a design
93 authorized by the board. All plans, specifications and reports prepared by a registered
94 commercial interior designer or under their supervision shall be stamped with the impression of
95 such seal. A registered commercial interior designer shall impress their seal on any plans or
96 specifications on if their certificate of registration is in full force and if they were the author of
97 such plans and specifications or in responsible charge of their preparation.

98 Section 280. A roster showing the names and the last known places of business of all
99 registered commercial interior designers shall be prepared by the board in the month of January
100 of each year. Such roster shall be posted on a publicly available website.

101 Section 281. (a) Upon receipt of a written application, the board may grant a certificate of
102 registration as a commercial interior designer emeritus to an interior designer who has retired
103 from the active practice of commercial interior design in the commonwealth. To be eligible for a
104 certificate of registration as a commercial interior designer emeritus, the applicant shall: (i)
105 submit an application together with a fee prescribed by the board; (ii) have been a commercial
106 interior designer in good standing in the commonwealth at the time of his retirement; (iii) be at
107 least 65 years of age; (iv) have been a registered a commercial interior designer in the
108 commonwealth for at least 10 years; (v) have relinquished his license to practice commercial
109 interior design; and (vi) satisfy any other requirements as may be prescribed by the board.

110 (b) A commercial interior designer emeritus shall not engage in nor hold themselves out
111 as engaging in the practice of commercial interior design. A commercial interior designer
112 emeritus shall be exempt from the continuing education requirements established in section 278.

113 (c) A commercial interior designer emeritus seeking reinstatement as a commercial
114 interior designer shall: (i) file an application for reinstatement with the board; (ii) pay an
115 administrative fee which shall be determined by the board; and (iii) comply with education or
116 other requirements established by the board.

117 Section 282. The board shall be charged with the enforcement of sections 276 to 282,
118 inclusive. If any person refuses to obey any decision of the board, the attorney general shall,
119 upon request of the board, file a petition for the enforcement of such decision in equity in the
120 superior court for Suffolk county or for the county in which the defendant resides or has a place
121 of business. After due hearing, the court shall order the enforcement of such decision or any part
122 thereof, if legally and properly made by the board.

123 SECTION 2. Chapter 13 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by
124 inserting after Section 109 the following new section:-

125 Section 110. (a) There shall be a board of registration of commercial interior designers,
126 herein after called the board, which shall consist of five members to be appointed by the
127 governor, four of whom shall each have been engaged in the practice of interior design for a
128 period of 10 or more years prior to their appointment, and shall be registered commercial interior
129 designers, and one member of the general public. Members of the board shall be residents of the
130 commonwealth.

131 (b) Each member of the board shall serve for a term of three years and until the governor
132 appoints a successor. No member shall be appointed to more than two consecutive full terms. A
133 member appointed for less than a full term may serve two full terms in addition to such part of a
134 full term. A former member shall be eligible for appointment after a lapse of one year.

135 (c) A member may be removed by the governor for neglect of duty, misconduct or
136 malfeasance or misfeasance in office after a written notice of the charges against them and an
137 opportunity to be heard. Upon the death, resignation or removal for cause of any member of the
138 board, the governor shall fill the vacancy for the remainder of that member's year.

139 (d) The members of the board shall serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed
140 for actual and necessary expenses reasonably incurred in the performances of their duties as
141 members or on behalf of the board.

142 (e) The board shall hold at least two regular meetings each year, and may hold special
143 meetings as required. At the first regular meeting each year, the board shall organize and choose

144 from its own members, a chairman, a vice chairman and a secretary. A quorum shall consist of
145 three members.

146 (f) The board may make such rules or by-laws as it may deem necessary in the
147 performance of its duties. The board shall have a seal, and its members may administer oaths in
148 the performance of its duties. The board shall have power to summon witnesses and to take
149 testimony and require proofs concerning all matters within its jurisdiction. The board shall
150 annually file to the commissioner of the division of professional licensure a report of its
151 proceedings, which shall include an itemized statement of all receipts and expenses of the board
152 for the year.