

## AIA Florida Legislative Day – 25 January 2022

Approximately 50 architects from across the state, accompanied by about 60 architectural students from 4 different universities, gathered in Tallahassee to visit as many state legislators as possible during the eight-hour day. Some legislators were occupied by their committee meetings so we met with their senior staff members, which can be just as effective in getting our points across. Our Chapter was able to meet with five of our nine legislators.

The scheduled meetings enabled AIA architects and students to inform the legislature of the current issues that are important to our members and the profession. Copies of the famous AIA FL Poster were given to each legislator's office. The poster is very popular for its graphics. It also includes summaries of our hot issues. True to form for our profession, after printing another issue arose. The poster shows four issues. We presented five to the legislators.

As a quick review, the five hot buttons are:

Architect Education Minority Assistance Program. This bill has senate and house versions. It would provide scholarships for minority fifth year architecture students enrolled in accredited university programs. Funding would come from licensure fees already collected. AIA FL requested support.

Consultants' Competitive Negotiation Act. It is not unusual for the CCNA to be under attack, and this session was no exception. This year's bills proposed removal of the current language requiring equitable distribution of contracts. AIA FL opposes any weakening of the qualifications-based selection process. AIA FL requested opposition.

Existing Building Inspection. This is one of many actions resulting from the Champlain Towers collapse. This senate bill creates a frequent inspection program that would include the entire building envelope. AIA FL supports a uniform, holistic building inspection standard with strong qualifications for inspectors. AIA FL requested support.

Resiliency. The state's Office of Resiliency was established in 2021. AIA FL believes its members to be uniquely qualified to advise on environmental impacts and solutions. AIA FL requested our architects be considered and utilized as a resource for the Resilient Florida program.

Fairness in Liability. When construction defects are discovered, engineering and architectural firms are liable. However, the individual professions within those firms are protected on a personal level. This bill would remove the personal liability protections for architects and engineers relative to the construction defects. AIA FL requested opposition to the removal of these personal protections.

AIA FL and its legislative team are monitoring over 50 separate bills affecting architects and the profession. These five are considered this session's most impactful, critical, time sensitive, disruptive, and/or frightening. This important aspect of AIA FL's work is often overlooked as being behind the scenes, but it is a layer of protection that is absolutely necessary for our profession.