

AIA Washington Council



October 2024 | Advocacy Newsletter

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2025 Session Preview



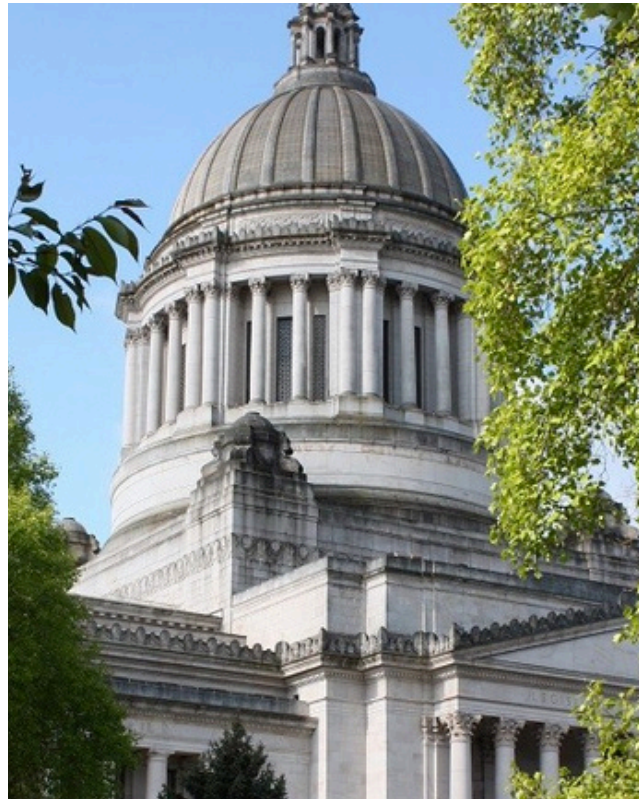
The 2025 Washington State Legislative Session: A Look Ahead

The upcoming 2025 legislative session will run from January 13 to April 27, spanning 105 consecutive calendar days. As a "long" session, legislators will focus on advancing policy priorities and crafting the state's biennial budget. This session holds particular significance for our profession, and AIAWA is actively preparing for what promises to be a dynamic four months.

Washington's current election cycle could significantly reshape the Legislature by January. With 25 of the 49 Senate seats and all 98 House seats on the ballot this fall, the political landscape may shift. Currently, Democrats hold substantial majorities in both chambers - 58-40 in the House and 29-20 in the Senate. While Washington has relatively few competitive legislative districts, several factors make this election cycle particularly noteworthy. Recent developments include a court-ordered redistricting affecting a dozen legislative districts across central Washington, multiple retirements in both the House and Senate, and Democratic efforts to expand their existing majorities.

Adding to the electoral significance are two crucial ballot initiatives: I-2117, which seeks to repeal the Climate Commitment Act, and I-2109, aimed at repealing the Capital Gains tax. With Washington facing a significant budget shortfall, these initiatives' outcomes could have far-reaching fiscal implications for the state.

Given the election cycle, many legislators have primarily focused on their campaigns, leaving most 2025 policy discussions for after the election. However, AIAWA has already begun gathering insights from legislators regarding what is on the agenda and advocating for issues pertaining to the profession.



2025 Session Preview



Session Preview: 2025 Priorities

Transit Oriented-Development: Promoting transit-oriented development (TOD) statewide has been a priority for AIAWA the last few legislative sessions. We saw two versions of TOD legislation, which sought to increase housing density and affordability in areas around transit stations, last biennium and have been told that it is expected to return in 2025. Our Livability Committee, comprised of members across Washington, look forward to informing TOD legislation that works for our state's diverse communities. As the Legislature continues to shape its version of TOD legislation, we plan to share our expertise with legislators, as well as other stakeholders, to help craft balanced policy that recognizes the unique needs of different regions.

State Fee Schedule: Earlier this year, AIAWA advocated successfully to preserve A/E Basic Services and fair compensation in state public works projects, securing updated hourly rates and a commitment from OFM for stakeholder-inclusive review of future guidelines. We hope to pick up this work with OFM at the start of the year.

Embodied Carbon: Following the passage of HB 1282 last session, Rep. Duerr plans to build on her embodied carbon work in 2025 with CALgreen inspired legislation. Her bill, which is still in the development stage, seeks to make embodied carbon emissions reduction part of the building code. The bill includes three compliance pathways:

- Path 1: Provides that building projects that reuse 45 percent of an existing structure and envelope automatically comply with the embodied carbon reduction requirements;
- Path 2: Requires all building projects to achieve an embodied carbon emissions reduction averaged across 90 percent of covered materials.
- Path 3: As an alternative to path 2, requires all building projects to achieve an embodied carbon emissions reduction for covered materials as demonstrated by a whole building life cycle assessment compared to a reference building

This would apply to all new construction, addition, and renovation of any building covered under the International Building Code that is 50,000 square feet or larger.

Members of our Climate Committee have already had the opportunity to provide feedback, and we look forward to continuing our conversations around this bill.



2025 Session Preview

Session Preview: 2025 Priorities, continued

Stock School Plans: Every few years, the Legislature introduces some version of stock school design legislation. Last biennium, AIAWA was successful in defeating SB 5343, a bill seeking to reduce the cost of school construction through the use of stock school plans, but we expect to see something similar in the coming session. Multiple conversations with legislators have revealed a deep concern with the cost of school construction, and an eagerness to find a solution to this challenge. Though they are looking at many options, we have heard that stock schools are on the table once again.

Our Education Committee is addressing this head on by attending school tours with the Washington Association of Maintenance and Operations Administrators (WAMOA) and working closely with our coalition partners to create a document which educates legislators about these costs and the shortsightedness of stock schools.

Taxes: Washington is looking at a multi-billion dollar budget shortfall over the next four years. This could look even more dire depending on the outcome of the initiatives, which is why many legislators are hesitant to discuss any legislation with a major price tag. That said, some legislators have previewed their plans to address this shortfall through new tax programs. One idea that seems to be gaining momentum is a payroll expense tax, similar to the JumpStart tax in Seattle. If it follows the Seattle model, employers would be required to pay a tax on employee wages if the business has more than \$X in payroll expenses and pay at least one employee more than \$Y in annual compensation. The dollar amounts have yet to be determined. Our Practice Committee will monitor and evaluate any legislation that comes forward.

In addition to these policies, we have also heard about various returning ideas such as home energy scoring, the energy upgrade navigator program, unemployment insurance for striking workers, and lot splitting. Regardless of what does make it onto the larger agenda, we are committed to ensuring that our members have the information they need to have an active voice as legislative policies and budgets are crafted and passed next year.

Stay Informed and Get Involved:

We encourage you to stay informed and participate in the legislative process. In upcoming newsletters, we will provide in-depth updates about our priority bills for this session. Your engagement is vital, and we want to hear your voice. If you are passionate about any of the topics mentioned and are not currently participating in an [AIAWA committee](#), we invite you to get involved. Consider joining one of our policy groups for the best opportunity to influence ongoing legislation.

For more information and to get involved, please reach out to [Samantha](#).



Advocacy In Action

We are excited to announce the return of our Advocacy in Action series, an informative two-part webinar program designed to empower you as architect advocates. This series is tailored to emerging professionals and students but is open to everyone who is passionate about advocating for issues that matter to them..

Part One: Advocacy 101

Date: December 3, 2024

Time: 12:00pm

Location: Online

In the first installment on December 3rd, you will delve into the essentials of advocacy. Discover how AIA works to safeguard our profession and address critical issues. Learn how you, as an architect, can play a pivotal role in shaping the future and engaging on matters important to you. This session will equip you with the knowledge and tools needed to become an effective advocate.

Part Two: Legislative Session Preview

Date: December 17, 2024

Time: 12:00pm

Location: Online

Part two of the series will serve as preview of what to expect in the 2025 legislative session. Gain insights into the upcoming legislative agenda and how it impacts the architectural field. Stay ahead of the curve and be prepared to actively engage in the legislative process.

Seats are filling up!

Whether you're an emerging professional, a seasoned architect, or simply someone who cares deeply about the issues that shape our profession, this series is for you. Join us to strengthen your advocacy skills and make a meaningful impact.

Register Now 

Capitol Connections 2025

Mark your calendars for March 3, 2025, and join us for an exciting day of connecting with your legislators and addressing critical issues affecting our profession.

This lobby day promises not only to be impactful but also an enjoyable experience for both members and legislators. Your participation is crucial in making our collective voice heard on matters that shape our industry's future.

Event Details:

Date: March 3, 2025

Location: Olympia, WA

Time: 8:30am-3:30pm

We look forward to the meaningful discussions that will unfold. Save the date for what is sure to be a day filled with connection, advocacy, and shared passion for architecture.

[Register Now](#)



Vote November 5th: Your Voice Matters!

Election Day is Tuesday, November 5th. Make your plan to vote today - our democracy works best when every voice is heard. Your ballot is your opportunity to help shape Washington's future. Don't miss out on this important chance to make a difference.

Visit votewa.gov to verify your registration status, check voting requirements, and track your ballot

AIWA Civic Design Awards

The 2024 AIA Washington Council's Civic Design Awards, which took place on September 19, 2024, in Seattle, Washington, celebrated the best examples of what can be realized when architects and civic clients work together to achieve quality design.

These projects represent the finest standards in innovation, sustainability, building performance, and overall integration with the client and surrounding community. View the Honor Award winners below and visit the [Civic Design Awards page](#) to learn more about all the 2024 winners.

Honor Awards



Life Skills Training Center, WA State School for the Blind
Mahlum Architects



Bloomside
SMR Architects



Seattle Ferry Terminal
NBBJ



The Buxton Center for Bainbridge Performing Arts
LMN Architects

White Center Food Bank
Side x Side Architects





Support Your Profession: Invest in APC

Your advocacy matters, and so does your role in shaping the legislative landscape that influences our profession. AIA Washington Council is your advocate in state government, diligently working on key issues that impact the architecture community.

The legislative and regulatory environment is a critical arena that directly affects how we provide professional services. The AIAWA Architects Political Committee (APC) is a vital part of our advocacy efforts. It supports lawmakers who champion our priorities, endorsing their campaigns and raising awareness about issues crucial to architects

What APC Does:

- **Supports Advocacy Priorities:** APC backs lawmakers aligned with our advocacy priorities and the values of our profession.
- **Builds Relationships:** By supporting campaigns and engaging with legislators, APC strengthens the relationships between AIAWA and lawmakers.
- **Amplifies Your Voice:** APC enables architects to become a powerful voice for the design and construction industry, positively influencing legislative decisions.

We can't do it alone. Your expertise and advocacy are critical for the architectural profession. Investments in APC ensures face-to-face opportunities to educate legislators about our work and provides a platform to advocate for the priorities of Washington architects.



Benefits of Your Investment:

- **Education Opportunities:** Your support enables face-to-face interactions, educating legislators about the architectural profession.
- **Advocacy Platform:** APC provides a platform for architects to advocate for our priorities, ensuring our voices are heard.
- **Political Influence:** By contributing to candidates aligned with our values, APC gives architects a strong political voice in state offices.

How You Can Contribute:

Your investment in APC is an investment in the future of our profession. Contribute to support candidates who align closely with AIAWA's legislative priorities and our shared values.

Visit the [APC Contribution Page](#) to learn more.



Washington Council

Exploring New Pathways to Architectural Licensure: October Town Hall Highlights

Washington state architect licensure candidates gained valuable insights into alternative licensing paths during an illuminating town hall webinar on October 15th. The event, hosted by AIAWA Board Associates in collaboration with NCARB, brought together distinguished industry leaders to demystify the licensing process.

Our expert panel featured key voices from NCARB alongside Sian Roberts, FAIA, and Sydney Muhle from the Washington State Board of Architects. Washington Architecture Licensing Advisors Neha Goel, AIA, and Tyler Gates, AIA, rounded out the discussion, offering their seasoned perspectives on the journey to licensure.

The session dove deep into frequently asked questions about alternative licensing paths and outlined crucial milestones candidates must reach before qualifying for the architecture licensing exam. For those who couldn't attend, a recording of this informative session is available online [here](#).

AIAWA extends its gratitude to our knowledgeable panelists and our dedicated Board Associates for orchestrating another successful NCARB event.



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AIA Washington Council serves as the collective voice for and a resource on state government policies that impact the practice of architecture for all architects and the profession through AIA components in Washington State.

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