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**Testimony for the House Professional Licensure Committee  
Hearing on the HB2706**

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## **Mandatory Continuing Education (MCE) Testimony**

Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee. My name is Joseph A. Castner. I am a Principal in the firm of KlingStubbins which has an office in Philadelphia as well as Cambridge, MA; Las Vegas, NV; Raleigh, NC; San Francisco, CA; and Washington, DC. As a practicing architect, I am registered in 17 jurisdictions and the United Kingdom. All require continuing education with one exception – Pennsylvania.

As a practitioner, I am a proponent of Mandatory Continuing Education. I find the programs beneficial for both my staff and myself in keeping us abreast of best practice issues, new technology, changing code requirements, and contract arrangements. More than eleven years ago when I joined KlingStubbins, I advocated the implementation of continuing education in my firm. Since that time, our firm has become an AIA Continuing Education System (CES) provider offering courses both in house and to architects from other firms. We make available various programs using both in-house expertise and out-sourced programs or individuals to provide subject matter.

From a firm perspective, the Programs we provide to our staff are one of the benefits I highlight as an employer in attracting new talent to our firm, and it is frequently an important consideration for younger staff. As a member and a former Chair of the Continuing Education Committee for AIA Philadelphia and one of the Co-Chairs of the *Design on the Delaware*, AIA Philadelphia's regional Continuing Education Conference, I have received considerable feedback from principals of other firms on the benefits their practices derive from continuing education programs offered by the Philadelphia Chapter of AIA. Attendance at conferences such as the National AIA convention and GreenBuild are considered a perk by our staff and is another valuable tool in employee retention.

In my practice, many of my fellow partners (Shareholders) have expressed that they find the AIA's Continuing Education System (CES) requirements to be a tedious book-keeping exercise to fulfill; often, adding the sentiment that "I am already doing research on materials, code requirements, and best-practices just to stay in business, so why do I need to prove it to another authority." However, I find that the benefits of continuing education requirements greatly outweigh the costs of the programs and the minutiae of recordkeeping. As you may know, AIA/CES facilitates architects in keeping current with practice trends, mastering new knowledge and skills, planning for the future, and meeting responsibly the role society entrusts to a professional. This program allows members to meet all their state mandatory continuing education requirements. Since I already must complete these requirements for AIA membership, it is not a hardship for me to comply

with the 16 states and United Kingdom's continuing education requirements; most accept AIA's records and all accept the programs as fulfilling their requirements.

The Profession of Architecture could be argued to be one of the professions being most dynamically transformed by constant and evolving technology; awareness of our environment and the environment's relationship to health, safety and welfare. Demonstration of continuing education (or continuing professional development) is the only effective means that the state has available to ensure that architects practicing today maintain the knowledge necessary to keep up with this rate of change. A commitment to maintaining professional competence through lifelong learning is critical for architects to meet the needs of a competitive worldwide economy and meet their professional responsibilities for health, safety and welfare.

The Commonwealth requires individuals to pass the Architect Registration Exam (ARE) as a condition of licensure. You might ask, isn't this exam an adequate test of the knowledge and skills required to practice architecture? Yes at the time of the exam. But there are many topics necessary for practice today, which were not tested on the ARE, five, ten, or twenty years ago. These include sustainable design; indoor air quality; design for response to terrorist threats and natural disasters; advances in seismic design and building systems; prevention of mold; and new project delivery methods, such as "integrated practice". The rate of change suggests that the knowledge base required of architects today to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the public will continue to change. A provision for continuing professional education requirement in Pennsylvania would ensure that all architects licensed in the state are constantly acquiring new knowledge that will make certain that they practice in a manner that protects the public now and in the future.

Some of the topics that should define acceptable Health, Safety & Welfare (HSW) hours to satisfy the Continuing Education requirements are:

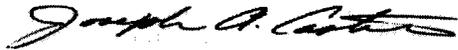
- building design
- landscape design
- environmental or land use analysis
- life safety
- architectural programming
- site planning
- site and soils analyses
- plant materials
- accessibility
- structural systems considerations

- lateral forces
- building codes
- evaluation and selection of building systems, products or materials
- construction methods and construction administration
- contract documentation
- energy conservation
- zoning and governance policies and procedures
- hurricane/high wind safety and design
- sustainability
- mold mitigation
- the impact of design on human physiology and neurology.

There in conclusion, I would urge the House Professional Licensure Committee to support making mandatory continuing education as a requirement for renewal of professional licensure for architects.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this hearing. If you need additional information, I would be happy to answer any questions you might have for me today. If in the future you need additional information, I would be happy to be a resource for you.

Sincerely,



Joseph A. Castner, AIA, RIBA, LEED AP  
Principal, Director of Architecture  
KlingStubbins

\*RIBA: Royal Institute of British Architects

\*LEED: Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design

**Joseph A. Castner** has been a Registered Architect licensed since 1984. He is a licensed architect in Delaware, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and the United Kingdom.

He is also a National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) certificate holder, 1984, and a LEED® 2.1 Accredited Professional, 2005

**His education includes:**

- Master of Science in Architecture, Building Design, Columbia University, 1985
- (Post Graduate) Rome Study Program, Columbia University, Summer 1985
- Bachelor of Architecture (High Honors), Illinois Institute of Technology, 1981
- Bachelor of Science (Major: Chemistry), Allegheny College, 1977
- Caesarea Maritima Archaeological Expedition, Allegheny College, 1974

**His teaching experience includes:**

- Assistant (Adjunct) Professor Drexel University, teaching Fifth Year Architecture Studio and Upper Level Course in Exterior Enclosures.
- Lecturer/Co-Instructor at University of Pennsylvania (PennDesign) for courses taught by KlingStubbins in “High-Tech” Exterior Enclosures and Building Systems Integration.

**His speaking engagements have included:**

- “Shrinking Horizons – One Architect’s View of Working Overseas”, AIA Associates Committee’s Speaking with an Architect Series. July 2008
- Co-Presenter, “Practicing with BIM”, Aegis Property Group, June 2008
- Co-Presenter, “Structures for High-Rise Buildings” Drexel University, February 2008
- Moderator, “Building for 2030”, Design on the Delaware, AIA Regional Professional Conference, 2007
- Co-Presenter, “Structural Systems for Skyscrapers” Drexel University, February 2007
- “Intern Development - Panel Discussion”, AIA Associates Committee’s Meetings with an Architect Forum. December 2005
- “Firm Management”, Member of Panel Discussion, Design on the Delaware, AIA Regional Professional Conference, 2003.

- “Designing the Envelope, SAP America Headquarters Building”, AIA Philadelphia Chapter Building Technology Committee Keynote Speaker, 2000.
- “Using Documentation Quality Control to Produce Quality Buildings”, Society of Council Architects of the U.K., October, 1993.

**Professional Associations include:**

- American Institute of Architects:
  - AIA Pennsylvania: Board Director 2008 to present; Vice Chair Government Affairs Committee; Vice Chair Membership Committee
  - AIA Philadelphia Chapter: Treasurer 2004; President –Elect 2005; President 2006; Continuing Education Committee 2002 to present and Co-Chair 2003 to 2005, Design on the Delaware Continuing Education Conference Co-Chair 2003 to 2005; Executive Committee 2004 to 2007, and Finance Committee 2004 to present
- Center for Architecture (Philadelphia): Board Director 2004- present; President, 2006
- Royal Institute of British Architects
- The Construction Specifications Institute
- National Institute of Building Sciences, Building Environment and Thermal Envelope Council
- The Architectural League of New York

**KlingStubbins** is an internationally recognized design firm with over sixty years of experience on a wide range of projects. They employ over five hundred people with offices in Cambridge, MA; Las Vegas, NV; Philadelphia, PA; Raleigh, NC; San Francisco, CA; and Washington, DC. KlingStubbins provides professional services in all major disciplines within the realm of architecture, engineering, interiors, planning and landscape architecture. The firm’s areas of market focus and specialization include Corporate/Commercial, Government, Health Care, Higher Education, Hospitality/Entertainment, Institutional/Civic, Mission Critical, and Research and Development. KlingStubbins is committed to design excellence and quality (in design, technology and service). They are nationally recognized leaders in sustainable design, consistent with their commitment to support the communities within which they work and live. They are innovators in project delivery, including BIM technology (Building Information Modeling).