



Monday, November 25, 2024

To the National Architectural Accrediting Board:

On behalf of AIA New York (AIANY) and the New York Coalition of Black Architects, the New York Chapter of the National Organization of Minority Architects (NYCOBA-NOMA), we are writing to express our profound concern regarding the recent revisions to the NAAB 2020 Conditions for Accreditation. The proposed changes, particularly the removal of Section 5.5, "Supportive Environment/Social Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion," compromise the core values that are foundational to our organizations and to the profession.

AIANY and NYCOBA-NOMA have long been committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) as principles that guide our work and impact the built environment. As architects and building professionals, our ability to design for and with diverse communities is essential. Together, AIANY and NYCOBA-NOMA work to create an environment of belonging and to celebrate all identities and perspectives in pursuit of just and sustainable communities.

Conversely, NAAB's proposed removal of these critical requirements reduces DEI to the lowest legal threshold, undermining our greater efforts to create a profession that serves and reflects the communities we design for. We understand that the legal environments in some states, including Texas and Florida, are now hostile even to the language that expresses the values of equity and inclusion our community embraces. However, we look to NAAB to find creative ways to lead on this, rather than take the lowest common denominator approach that effectively nullifies the work we have collectively sought to enshrine through the 2020 changes and more focused engagement on equity over the last few years. These principles are fundamental to the integrity and ethical responsibilities of our profession, and the removal of such language for the sake of legal compliance in some states sacrifices too much. We urge you to consider the implications of this decision.



Thank you for considering our perspective and we hope the final proposal reflects the critical role that diversity, equity, and inclusion play in shaping a future for the profession and society that we can be proud of.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Switzer" with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Greg Switzer, AIA, NOMA, NCARB
AIA New York 2024 President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Allison E. Lane" in a cursive style.

Allison Lane, RA, AIA, ASID, NOMA, LEED
AP, WELL AP, NCARB, NCIDQ
NYCOBA-NOMA President