

Press Release

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Tampa Architect and 2013 American Institute of Architects President Announces Federal Legislative Priorities

For immediate release:

Washington, D.C., Jan. 9 2013—Under the guidance of Florida architect, Mickey Jacob, FAIA, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) today announced a five-point legislative agenda for the 113th Congress, targeting job creation for small businesses as a top priority.

2013 AIA President, Mickey Jacob, FAIA, is a Tampa Bay resident and architect who previously served as the AIA Florida president in 2004-2005. After, he went on to serve as the Florida/Caribbean Regional Director on the AIA National Board of Directors and was elected to serve a two-year term as an AIA Vice President in 2009. Jacob is only the second Florida architect to serve as the national president.

“Our legislative agenda reflects the interests of our members, which not so coincidentally reflects the priorities of the American people,” said Jacob. “These five priorities for the next two years have the creation of jobs as their centerpiece while also seeking to shore up our aging infrastructure, make our communities more resilient and assure we invest in the next generation of architects.”

The five priorities are:

1. Help Small Businesses Create Jobs

Small businesses create jobs in every community. More than 97 percent of architecture firms employ 50 or fewer people; every project they design leads to job opportunities for millions of construction workers. But red tape, limited capital, and a complicated tax code hold them back. Congress needs to ensure that federal agencies work with small companies to help them succeed. And our small businesses need a simpler tax code that helps architecture firms grow without punitive tax increases.

2. Repair and Strengthen our Buildings

As millions of construction workers remain unemployed, buildings and vital infrastructure have crumbled, hurting our economy and endangering the public. But our nation’s infrastructure goes beyond roads and bridges. America needs sound policies that free up capital for private sector building projects, and new ways to invest in public sector buildings, providing jobs in the short term and a more competitive economy in the long run.

3. Build Sustainable, Resilient and Vibrant Communities

After years of economic turmoil and natural calamities, America’s communities must rebuild. Homeowners and businesses are demanding the next generation of buildings that save energy, revitalize traditional main streets and reflect the new ways that Americans live, work and play. As Superstorm Sandy showed, we need to do far more to protect our communities from disaster. And with buildings accounting for more

than 70 percent of the nation's electricity use, we can do so much more to make our homes, offices and schools use less energy.

4. **Reform Government to Build Better with Less**

Governments need to tighten their belts while providing essential services the public demands. That means doing more, and doing it better, with fewer resources. But too many laws and regulations block innovative solutions that maximize return on investment. When it comes to buildings, Congress can make sure taxpayer dollars are spent wisely by reforming procurement rules so that architects can deliver projects that are safe, productive and sustainable.

5. **Invest in the Next Generation of Design Leaders**

Millions of young people aspire to help their communities build a better future – but a lack of opportunity and the crushing cost of education hold them back. As a result, the design and construction industry faces a severe shortage of talent, at exactly the moment we need to start rebuilding for the future. America can't afford to lose a generation of talented design professionals, simply because they could not afford the cost of learning.

See full legislative agenda here: <http://www.aia.org/advocacy/federal/AIAS078578>

"In 2013, our nation faces great challenges that require innovative, forward-thinking solutions," Jacob said. "Our 80,000 professionals – who are job catalysts in every community - urge Congress and the White House to put partisanship aside and work together to build our nation's future."

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The Florida Association of the American Institute of Architects, headquartered in Tallahassee, represents the interests of more than 3,200 members in Florida. Members adhere to a code of ethics and professional conduct that assures the client, the public, and colleagues of an AIA-member architect's dedication to the highest standards in professional practice.

About The American Institute of Architects

Founded in 1857, members of the American Institute of Architects consistently work to create more valuable, healthy, secure, and sustainable buildings, neighborhoods, and communities. Through nearly 300 state and local chapters, the AIA advocates for public policies that promote economic vitality and public well being. Members adhere to a code of ethics and conduct to ensure the highest professional standards. The AIA provides members with tools and resources to assist them in their careers and business as well as engaging civic and government leaders, and the public to find solutions to pressing issues facing our communities, institutions, nation and world. Visit www.aia.org