

For the past 24 years, AIA's State Government Network members (a national group of architects and Component Executives) have come together to discuss and strategize legislative and regulatory trends. This year's June 5-6th meeting location was Seattle, Washington and proved to be one of the best ever, with almost every AIA Component represented. AIA Louisiana was represented by Lynn Robertson, Executive Director.

The meeting was kicked off by Yvonne Castillo, Director of State and Local Government Relations, with an overview of relevant legislative trends and a demonstration of the voice-over What Architects Do digital tool (with a sample script) for AIA Components to use with elected and appointed officials. "This pdf gives members a visual tool to talk about the scope of architectural services succinctly, without overwhelming the viewer with technical-speak" said Castillo. She ended her opening remarks with a challenge to the architectural profession to consider AIA's repositioning effort an opportunity to reposition the profession at the proverbial *legislative table* asserting that "architects shouldn't always approach legislative issues from a defense posture; instead it's time for the profession to offer its *own* policy ideas for helping state and local governmental entities do more with less." To that end, AIA National has kick-started a new approach by offering AIA Components an AIA National-drafted legislation that codifies a process for public-public partnerships and *smart* public-private partnerships (P3). Talking points, a summary, and an article in Architect Magazine are also available as educational background materials for Component use. On the subject of P3, SGN attendees heard a presentation from the Principal Architect for the California courts, Clifford Ham, to learn more about the Long Beach Courthouse project and its procurement and delivery as a performance-based P3 contract.

SGN continued its discussions on project delivery issues, including design-build (DB), and the DB reform toolkit developed by AIA National, to help empower Components to influence positive outcomes in state and local government policies. SGN members concluded the conversations with recommendations that staff begin the process of researching additional financing incentives which Components could offer to state and local officials looking for innovative ways to meet infrastructure demands.

Florida and Alaska led a discussion of shared common challenges and best practices related to managing qualifications-based selection issues with public sector clients. And of course, no SGN meeting occurs without an energetic discussion, in this case led by Oregon and Michigan, of issues and strategies related to encroachment into architectural scope of practice from other licensed professionals and unlicensed individuals. AIA National has also developed a plethora of matrices for Components to use depending on the nature of the encroachment – be it interior designers, engineers, or other unlicensed individuals.

In addition, a Codes Development and Commissioning presentation offered attendees a greater awareness of market and legislative opportunities. Other SGN-recommended steps for 2015 included the formation of a Task Force of volunteers from California, New Jersey, Maryland, and both North and South Carolina, to explore an AIA-led vertical infrastructure report, similar to ASCE's Infrastructure Report Card, to help policymakers prioritize capital construction budgets for public facilities. Ways to help state and local entities streamline the permitting process was another topic of discussion that ended with consensus that AIA staff should begin exploring a potential toolkit for components to use in their legislative efforts.

The grand finale presentation was presented by Illinois and offered wonderful advocacy strategies for member-AIA components moving forward.

Next year, SGN will be celebrating its special 25-year Silver Anniversary. Planning has already begun for what is sure to be, as always, the most unique AIA-sponsored meeting...where design matters, but not nearly as much as business!