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## READERS' VIEWS

# Interior Design Board a sham

A major revelation of the 2012 legislative session is the fact that Bobby Jindal fails miserably as a fiscal conservative. To further demonstrate that fact, one needs to look no further than a board under his own office: the Interior Design Board.

The CATO Institute, a think tank focusing on limited government and free markets, which would be expected to align with Jindal principles and policies, has on its website a study conducted by the Institute for Justice. The study reveals the fact that, in states which regulate interior designers, since 1998, an average of one out of every 5,650 interior designers has experienced a regulatory complaint for reasons other than licensure! Such is certainly the case in Louisiana!

For over a year, I've been videotaping meetings of the Interior Design Board, and anyone can view the videos at <http://www.auctioneer-la.org/idbvideos.htm>. During that time, not one consumer complaint has been presented. Instead, the board spends upwards of 90 percent of its time (no exaggeration!) discussing how to "educate the public" on how important it is for designers to be licensed.

It's funny that CPAs don't have a need for such discussions, nor do lawyers, doctors, real estate agents, plumbers, barbers, etc. The very fact that a board must devote such an incredibly large percentage of its meeting time justifying its ex-

istence is itself evidence that its existence isn't justified.

Only three states (Florida, Louisiana, and Nevada) require interior designers to be licensed, with approximately 19 other states deploying less-formal "practice act" requirements. The remaining 28 states get along just fine with no regulation of interior designers whatsoever.

The Institute for Justice has appropriately blasted interior-design regulation as creating artificial barriers to entry, designed to do nothing more than artificially inflate interior designers' income. Numerous other governors (New York, Colorado, California, New Jersey, and Ohio) have vetoed legislation calling for regulation of the interior-design profession. If liberal states like New York and California see no logic to such regulation, surely a "fiscal conservative" governor like Bobby Jindal can see that wisdom!

If Gov. Jindal truly wants to be a fiscal conservative, he should start by abolishing a board directly under his own office, the Interior Design Board, sweep its fund balance into the general fund to offset health-care cuts, and thereby demonstrate to the nation that he truly can "walk the walk" and not merely "talk the talk" of a fiscal conservative!

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