

## **Government Affairs Update**

This past year saw many matters of concern, many opportunities, and many successes in advocacy at the state and federal levels! Below are some updates on bills/issues in Congress. As you can see, the collective efforts of many individuals are yielding positive results! (This update is provided with the assistance of Andrew Goldberg at AIA National.)

### **179D Energy Efficiency Tax Deduction**

On December 18, Congress restored and extended the 179D Energy Efficiency Commercial Building Tax Deduction, effective through the end of 2016. This green-building incentive expired in late 2014 but was restored thanks in part to the efforts of numerous AIA members!

### **Sustainable design requirements for federal buildings**

Although the House passed an energy bill that includes repeal of the 2030 energy efficiency requirements included in the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA). (EISA requires federal buildings to "...be designed so that the fossil fuel-generated energy consumption of the building is reduced..." to 0% in 2030.) The bill is not expected to progress through Senate approval. Also, President Obama issued a veto threat on the bill, specifically citing 2030 repeal as one of the reasons for his opposition. The AIA is "cautiously optimistic" that the 2030 targets will not be threatened in 2016.

### **National Design Services Act**

The National Design Services Act (NDSA) was introduced into the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress in June with bi-partisan sponsorship. A number of House members have cosponsored the NDSA (HR 2938) and are working toward introducing a Senate version of the NDSA in 2016. Prospects for passage are unclear, since the NDSA will likely need to be attached to a larger bill addressing student loans; the outlook for that happening in 2016 are undetermined. However, growing support for the NDSA means that once a larger bill proceeds through Congress, the potential to attach the NDSA to the bill will be significantly improved. (Note! None of Alabama's Congressional representatives are currently sponsoring the bill. Please contact your Congressman/Congresswoman and encourage co-sponsorship of the NDSA!)

### **Historic Tax Credit**

A bipartisan bill (HR 3846) that strengthens the Historic Tax Credit (HTC) has been introduced, but has yet to advance through the committee process. A bigger concern is that, should Congress take up major tax reform in 2017 or beyond, incentives like the HTC (as well as 179d and a host of others) could be swept away. AIA's main goal is two-fold: to "play offense" to improve the HTC, and to "play defense" to ensure it remains in the tax code. This year (2016) is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Preservation Act, and the AIA and its allies are pushing to publicize the HTC's benefits and build support for it.

(End.)