

We, the board of AIGA Raleigh, stand in support of equal treatment of all people. That puts us in stark opposition to House Bill 2 (HB2), a law passed by the North Carolina General Assembly on March 23, 2016.

We are not alone. Businesses, organizations, and individuals are taking a public stand against HB2 by withdrawing their commercial activities from our state. And we believe many more creative individuals are quietly changing their minds about living in North Carolina. These designers, architects, entrepreneurs, writers, makers, and more are AIGA's lifeblood and fuel for further innovation. With the passage of HB2, our creative community and our state are reduced to less than what we could—and **should**—be.

Our chapter's mission is to "create a place where design thrives." Creativity flourishes when people with different perspectives participate openly and honestly. That's why diversity and inclusion are not optional for an organization like ours—they are the foundation of the creativity AIGA was created to nurture and protect.

In the 100+ years since it was founded, AIGA, the professional organization for design, has shifted from a club for graphic designers into a coalition of regionally-led, community-focused organizations. Today, AIGA acts to advance our craft and improve the human condition. As design becomes known as a force for change and good, we must apply our talent to solving today's challenges. HB2 rolls back progress we've made on civil rights and equality for all. We can't stand by and let it happen without action.

Over the last 8 years, AIGA Raleigh has shifted our chapter goals to focus on local and national diversity and inclusion activities, including:

- **Design for Good** board position and programming
- **Design Impact** board position and programming
- **Mentorship programming**
- **Uniting People** board position, community building, and outreach
- **Get Out the Vote** national design initiative

As an organization, we prefer not to stand **against** something. We choose to stand **for** something—an open, thriving creative community.

Creativity is one of the most enduring competitive advantages of the American experience and contributes to innovation in all the other fields.

Art and design provides both a creative opportunity for young people and a way of thinking, seeing, and making beyond the limitations of the past, while providing a purposeful use of imagination.

We deeply appreciate your foresight and thoughtfulness in supporting this significant contribution to a complete education and the development of the American character in children.

Fellow designers, makers, and communicators—if you believe what we believe—get involved and use your talent to advocate for diversity and inclusion for all people in North Carolina.

Laura Hamlyn, president, AIGA Raleigh

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