

# Impacts of Elimination of Licensure of Landscape Architects

January 12, 2020

Deregulation of landscape architects and the practice of landscape architecture would likely result in the following **short- and long-term impacts**:

- Jeopardizes the public safety, health, and welfare of Virginians and visitors to Virginia as competency obtained through a licensing exam and continuing education would be eliminated
- Removes accountability and confidence in the profession that consumers, state agencies and local governments rely upon
- Impacts future job opportunities of enrolled students at Virginia Tech and University of Virginia's accredited landscape architecture degree programs; students, the majority of whom are Virginia residents, will necessarily have to leave Virginia to seek employment in other states to gain the average of 3 years of work experience under a licensed landscape as a prerequisite to licensure in another state
- Transfers accountability and risk from landscape architects to consumers
- Jeopardizes the livelihoods of hundreds of licensed professionals, scores of firms, as well as the non-professional employees of these firms
- Shifts volume of work from landscape architects to engineers, architects, and surveyors that may not be minimally competent to practice some aspects of landscape architecture
- Elimination of landscape architects functioning as prime consultants on public projects that require sealing designs and coordinating other licensed design professionals
- Reduction of application of landscape architectural knowledge and approach to projects
- Reduction of landscape architect-led multidisciplinary firms
- Reduction of senior landscape architects serving in lead roles (principals, officers, directors) in multidisciplinary firms
- Elimination of landscape architects holding state agency positions requiring licensure
- Reduction in the number of employed landscape architects, associated designers, and support and administrative staff
- Migration of entry-level designers seeking licensure to other states that license landscape architects
- Limitations on professional liability insurance coverage
- Discourages landscape architects in other states from entering practice in Virginia
- Barriers to reciprocity in other states for Virginia landscape architects leading to the flight of firms and professionals no longer able to practice here
- Prohibits the use of the title of landscape architect since the Code of Virginia restricts the use of the terms "architect," "architecture," and "architectural"
- Severely limits the scope of practice of landscape architecture to planting design given that grading and drainage design, storm water management design, siting and layout of vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation systems, design of site structures will be restricted to architects, engineers, and land surveyors; this would essential transform landscape architects into landscape designers and garden designers