



Department of Justice

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**DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE FILES ANTITRUST CASE
AGAINST THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS**

The Department of Justice filed a civil antitrust suit against the American Institute of Architects (AIA) today, alleging that it unreasonably restrained price competition in the sale of architectural services. The parties also filed a consent decree that would settle the suit.

The suit alleging a violation of Section 1 of the Sherman Act and proposed consent decree were filed in the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C.

The AIA is generally recognized as the national professional association of architects. About 54,000 architects belong to the AIA.

The complaint alleged that the AIA and co-conspirators had entered into an unlawful agreement to prohibit AIA members from engaging in competitive bidding, discounting fees, or providing free services. According to the complaint, the Chicago Chapter of the AIA in September 1984 adopted a Compensation and Fee Policy Statement which prohibited such practices.

The complaint further alleges that various national officers and employees of the AIA also endorsed and assisted in promoting

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and disseminating the statement.

The proposed consent decree enjoins the AIA and its approximately 280 local and state components from having any code of ethics or statement that has the purpose or effect of prohibiting or restraining AIA members from engaging in competitive bidding, discounting, or providing free services or that states or implies that any of these practices are unethical, unprofessional, or contrary to any policy of the AIA or any of its components.

The consent decree requires the AIA to institute a comprehensive antitrust compliance program, which would include annual written certifications from various AIA officials for the next 10 years that they understand and agree to comply with the decree and that they understand that noncompliance may result in disciplinary measures and charges of criminal contempt. The AIA also is required to establish a Decree Committee to supervise and monitor compliance with the decree.

The consent decree further provides that the court may impose a civil fine upon the AIA or any of its components for a violation of the decree without any showing of willfulness or intent.

The decree further requires the AIA to pay \$50,000 to the United States for the costs of the investigation.

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If the consent decree is approved by the court after a required 60-day comment period, it would terminate the suit.

The consent decree supersedes a final judgment entered against the AIA in 1972 for violating the antitrust laws.

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