

### Introduction:

Architects / Designers / Planners for Social Responsibility is petitioning AIA to amend its code of ethics to do more for human rights. With this amendment, AIA can take leadership in an area of broad public concern, joining other prominent professions. The architectural profession collectively is responsible for the design of the built environment and must use our position to protect the public's health, safety, and wellbeing from buildings that violate human rights

### Current AIA Code:

Ethics Standard 1.4: Human Rights: Members should uphold human rights in all their professional endeavors.

Note: Ethics Standards are not enforceable. No Rules (enforceable components of the Code) address building projects that violate Human Rights.

### Proposed Rule 1.402:

*Members shall not design spaces intended for execution or for torture or other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, including prolonged solitary confinement.*

### Proposed Commentary:

*The Convention Against Torture and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights prohibit "torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" (ICCPR Article 7) and ICCPR also requires that "all persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person" (Article 10). Prolonged solitary confinement has been identified as a form of torture or prohibited cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment by the United Nations Human Rights Council, Committee Against Torture, and the Special Rapporteur on Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.*

The recent projects below violate human rights.



CAD model, San Quentin Lethal Injection Chamber, 2010



San Quentin Lethal Injection Chamber, 2010



Guantanamo Bay Camp 5, 2005



Guantanamo Bay Camp 5, 2005, indefinite solitary confinement

### Good for Architects and for AIA:

- Recent AIA Ethics Code amendments promoting environmental sustainability and pro bono practice reaffirm architects' responsibility to the public. Strengthening our human rights standard will continue this positive trend.
- The American Medical Association, American Psychological Association, American Nurses Association, and many other professional associations all already have ethics codes prohibiting participation in executions, torture, and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.
- This amendment will support designers who want to design more humane environments for people in prison by protecting them from being undercut by others who are willing to meet client demands for abusive spaces.
- This proposal is not retroactive. It does not penalize or "blame" architects who designed these facilities in the past.
- "Improvements" to these building types are not necessary or reasonable. There is no "better" way to design a room intended to kill or degrade someone.

### Supports Human Rights:

- International Human Rights NGOs and the U.N. have called for the end of the death penalty repeatedly from 1968 until today.
- The U.S. has 37 U.S. Death Rows that have completed over >2,000 executions since 1976.
- In 2012, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Torture defined solitary confinement of juveniles, the mentally ill, or anyone else in excess of 15 days as a form of torture or other prohibited cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. We should respond to this change.
- There are 45 dedicated "supermax" prisons in the U.S. holding ~20,000 people in prolonged solitary confinement. The typical cell is 7' x 12'. The average detention is 5 years but the longest detention is over 40 years. Youth and the mentally ill are routinely held in solitary confinement across the U.S.

more information: [www.adpsr.org/home/ethics\\_reform](http://www.adpsr.org/home/ethics_reform)