Resolution 15-6

Title
7 World Trade Center

Sponsors
Daniel Barnum, FAIA
and
Fifty Members of the Institute

Intent
To cause the AIA to adopt a Position Statement in support of a new investigation into the complete collapse of 7 World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.

Text of Resolution
WHEREAS, under the AIA Public Policies and Position Statements, it is the responsibility of architects to design a resilient environment that can more successfully adapt to natural conditions and that can more readily absorb and recover from adverse events; and

WHEREAS, architects and others involved in the design and construction of buildings depend upon the information obtained from investigations into building failures to inform the development of model building codes; and

WHEREAS, on September 11, 2001, 7 World Trade Center, a 47-story high-rise building, suffered a complete collapse; and

WHEREAS, on November 20, 2008, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) released the final report of its three-year investigation into the complete collapse of 7 World Trade Center, which concluded that fires, an unprecedented cause of failure for a modern high-rise building, were the primary cause of failure; and

WHEREAS, the cause of failure identified by the NIST investigation would mean that hundreds of high-rise buildings in the United States are susceptible to similar failure from fire; and

WHEREAS, thousands of members of the architecture and engineering professions, including the 55 sponsors of this resolution, believe the NIST investigation did not adhere to the principles of the scientific method and, as a result, the conclusions of the NIST investigation are fatally flawed.

(see next page)
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the AIA Board of Directors shall adopt a Position Statement, to be published in the AIA Directory of Public Policies and Position Statements, stating:

- The AIA’s belief that incidents involving the catastrophic failure of buildings and other structures must be investigated using the highest standards of science-based investigation and analysis in order to provide accurate and meaningful information in the development of model building codes;
- The AIA’s recognition that many members of the architecture profession believe the NIST investigation into the complete collapse of 7 World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, did not adhere to the principles of the scientific method and, as a result, the conclusions of the NIST investigation are fatally flawed;
- The AIA’s belief that this perspective merits further study; and
- The AIA’s support for a new investigation into the complete collapse of 7 World Trade Center.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it is advised that this Position Statement be incorporated as Position Statement #3 under the Construction Industry Regulation Public Policy. The recommended language of this Position Statement is as follows:

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The AIA believes that incidents involving the catastrophic failure of buildings and other structures must be investigated using the highest standards of science-based investigation and analysis in order to provide accurate and meaningful information in the development of model building codes. In adherence to the scientific method, investigations should:

- Consider all available data;
- Consider hypotheses that most readily explain the available data;
- Test those hypotheses and analyze the results without bias; and
- Provide for external review and replication by making all data available.

The AIA recognizes that many members of the architecture profession believe the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) investigation into the complete collapse of 7 World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, did not adhere to these principles and, as a result, the conclusions of the NIST investigation are fatally flawed. The AIA believes this perspective merits further study and supports a new investigation into the complete collapse of 7 World Trade Center.