

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2726

To prescribe Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 4, 2025

Mr. BANKS (for himself, Mr. MARSHALL, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works

A BILL

To prescribe Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture,
and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Beautifying Federal
5 Civic Architecture Act of 2025”.

6 **SEC. 2. POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES.**

7 It is the policy of the United States that—

8 (1) applicable Federal public buildings should—

9 (A) uplift and beautify public spaces;

10 (B) inspire the human spirit;

1 (C) ennoble the United States;

2 (D) command respect from the general
3 public;

4 (E) be visually identifiable as civic build-
5 ings; and

6 (F) as appropriate, respect regional archi-
7 tectural heritage;

8 (2) designs for applicable Federal public build-
9 ings should be selected with substantial input from
10 the local community;

11 (3) architecture, particularly traditional archi-
12 tecture and classical architecture, that meets the cri-
13 teria described in paragraph (1) is the preferred ar-
14 chitecture for applicable Federal public buildings;

15 (4) in the District of Columbia, classical archi-
16 tecture is the preferred and default architecture for
17 applicable Federal public buildings absent excep-
18 tional factors necessitating another kind of architec-
19 ture;

20 (5) where the architecture of applicable Federal
21 public buildings diverges from the criteria described
22 in paragraph (1), great care and consideration shall
23 be taken to choose a design that—

24 (A) commands respect from the general
25 public; and

1 (B) clearly conveys to the general public
2 the dignity, enterprise, vigor, and stability of
3 the system of self-government of the United
4 States;

5 (6) when renovating, reducing, or expanding ap-
6 plicable Federal public buildings that do not meet
7 the criteria described in paragraph (1), the feasi-
8 bility and potential expense of building redesign to
9 meet that criteria should be examined; and

10 (7) where feasible and economical, a redesign
11 described in paragraph (6) should be given substan-
12 tial consideration, especially with respect to the exte-
13 rior of the applicable Federal public building.

14 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

15 In this Act:

16 (1) 2025 DOLLARS.—The term “2025 dollars”
17 means dollars adjusted for inflation using the Gross
18 Domestic Product price deflator of the Bureau of
19 Economic Analysis, with 2025 as the base year.

20 (2) ADMINISTRATION.—The term “Administra-
21 tion” means the General Services Administration.

22 (3) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Adminis-
23 trator” means the Administrator of General Serv-
24 ices.

25 (4) APPLICABLE FEDERAL PUBLIC BUILDING.—

1 (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “applicable
2 Federal public building” means—

3 (i) any Federal courthouse;

4 (ii) any Federal agency headquarters;

5 (iii) any public building in the Na-
6 tional Capital region (as defined in section
7 8702 of title 40, United States Code); and

8 (iv) any other public building, the cost
9 or expected cost to design, build, and finish
10 of which is more than \$50,000,000 in
11 2025 dollars.

12 (B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term “applicable
13 Federal public building” does not include an in-
14 frastructure project or a land port of entry.

15 (5) BRUTALIST ARCHITECTURE.—The term
16 “Brutalist architecture” means the style of architec-
17 ture that grew out of the early 20th-century mod-
18 ernist movement that is characterized by a massive
19 and block-like appearance with a rigid geometric
20 style and large-scale use of exposed poured concrete.

21 (6) CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE.—

22 (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “classical ar-
23 chitecture” means the architectural tradition—

(i) derived from the forms, principles,
and vocabulary of the architecture of
Greek and Roman antiquity; and

(ii) later developed and expanded on
by—

(I) Renaissance architects, including
Alberti, Brunelleschi, Michelangelo,
and Palladio;

(II) Enlightenment masters, including
Robert Adam, John Soane, and Christopher Wren;

(III) 19th Century architects, including
Benjamin Henry Latrobe, Robert Mills,
and Thomas U. Walter;

(IV) 20th Century practitioners, including
Julian Abele, Daniel Burnham, Rafael
Carmoega, Charles F. McKim, John Russell
Pope, Julia Morgan, and the firm of
Delano and Aldrich.

(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term “classical architecture” includes styles such as Neoclassical, Georgian, Federal, Greek Revival, Beaux-Arts, and Art Deco.

1 (7) DECONSTRUCTIVIST ARCHITECTURE.—The
 2 term “Deconstructivist architecture” means the style
 3 of architecture—

4 (A) generally known as
 5 “deconstructivism”; and

6 (B) that emerged during the late 1980s
 7 and features fragmentation, disorder, disconti-
 8 nuity, distortion, skewed geometry, and the ap-
 9 pearance of instability.

10 (8) GENERAL PUBLIC.—The term “general
 11 public” means members of the public who are not—

12 (A) artists, architects, engineers, art or ar-
 13 chitecture critics, instructors or professors of
 14 art or architecture, or members of the building
 15 industry; or

16 (B) affiliated with any interest group,
 17 trade association, or any other organization
 18 whose membership is financially affected by de-
 19 cisions involving the design, construction, or re-
 20 modeling of public buildings.

21 (9) OFFICER.—The term “officer” has the
 22 meaning given the term in section 2104 of title 5,
 23 United States Code.

1 (10) PREFERRED ARCHITECTURE.—The term
2 “preferred architecture” means the architecture de-
3 scribed in section 2(3).

4 (11) PUBLIC BUILDING.—The term “public
5 building” has the meaning given the term in section
6 3301(a) of title 40, United States Code.

7 (12) TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE.—The term
8 “traditional architecture” includes—

9 (A) classical architecture; and

10 (B) the historic humanistic architecture,
11 including Gothic, Romanesque, Second Empire,
12 Pueblo Revival, Spanish Colonial, and other
13 Mediterranean styles of architecture historically
14 rooted in various regions of the United States.

15 **SEC. 4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR FEDERAL ARCHITEC-**
16 **TURE.**

17 To the maximum extent practicable, all Federal agen-
18 cies shall adhere to the following Guiding Principles for
19 Federal Architecture (referred to in this Act as the “Guid-
20 ing Principles”):

21 (1) PREFERRED ARCHITECTURAL STYLE.—

22 (A) IN GENERAL.—Provide requisite and
23 adequate facilities in a preferred architectural
24 style and form that is distinguished and reflects
25 the dignity, enterprise, vigor, and stability of

1 the Federal Government which, by its proven
2 ability to meet those requirements, shall be
3 classical architecture and traditional architec-
4 ture, while not excluding the possibility of alter-
5 native architectural styles in appropriate cir-
6 cumstances.

7 (B) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out sub-
8 paragraph (A), each Federal agency shall en-
9 sure that—

10 (i) major emphasis is placed on the
11 choice of design that embodies architec-
12 tural excellence;

13 (ii) specific attention is paid to the
14 possibilities of incorporating into that de-
15 sign qualities that reflect the regional ar-
16 chitectural traditions of the area of the
17 United States in which the applicable Fed-
18 eral public building is located;

19 (iii) where appropriate, fine art is in-
20 corporated into that design, with emphasis
21 on the work of living American artists;

22 (iv) the design adheres to sound con-
23 struction practice and uses proven depend-
24 able materials, methods, and equipment;
25 and

1 (v) applicable Federal public buildings
2 are economical to build, operate, and main-
3 tain and accessible to the handicapped.

4 (2) FLOW OF DESIGN.—

5 (A) IN GENERAL.—Design must flow from
6 the needs of the Federal Government and the
7 aspirations and preferences of the people of the
8 United States to the architectural profession,
9 and not vice versa.

10 (B) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out sub-
11 paragraph (A), each Federal agency shall—

12 (i) be willing to pay additional costs to
13 avoid excessive uniformity in the design of
14 applicable Federal public buildings;

15 (ii) where appropriate, carry out com-
16 petitions for the design of applicable Fed-
17 eral public buildings; and

18 (iii) prior to the awarding of impor-
19 tant design contracts, seek the advice of
20 distinguished architects practiced in clas-
21 sical architecture or traditional architec-
22 ture.

23 (3) BUILDING SITES.—

24 (A) IN GENERAL.—The choice and devel-
25 opment of the site of an applicable Federal pub-

1 lic building shall be considered the first step of
 2 the design process, which shall be the made in
 3 cooperation with State and local agencies.

4 (B) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out sub-
 5 paragraph (A), each Federal agency shall—

6 (i) pay special attention to the general
 7 ensemble of streets and public places of
 8 which the applicable Federal public build-
 9 ings will form a part; and

10 (ii) where possible, ensure applicable
 11 Federal public buildings are located in a
 12 way so as to permit a generous develop-
 13 ment of landscape.

14 **SEC. 5. GSA REQUIREMENTS.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall—

16 (1) adhere to the policy of the United States
 17 described in section 2 and the Guiding Principles;
 18 and

19 (2) expeditiously update policies and procedures
 20 of the Administration—

21 (A) to incorporate the policy of the United
 22 States described in section 2 and the Guiding
 23 Principles; and

24 (B) to advance the purpose of this Act.

1 (b) REQUIREMENTS.—In adhering to the policy of the
2 United States described in section 2 and the Guiding Prin-
3 ciples, the Administrator shall—

4 (1) ensure that architects employed by the Ad-
5 ministration, whose duties include reviewing, assist-
6 ing with, or approving the selection of architects or
7 designs for applicable Federal public buildings, have
8 formal training in, or substantial and significant ex-
9 perience with, classical architecture or traditional ar-
10 chitecture;

11 (2) establish a position of Senior Advisor for
12 Architectural Design in the Administration, which
13 shall be filled by an individual with specialized expe-
14 rience in classical architecture or traditional archi-
15 tecture, the responsibilities of which shall be—

16 (A) to assist in the development of Admin-
17 istration procedures relating to carrying out
18 this Act;

19 (B) to advise on architectural standards;
20 and

21 (C) to provide guidance to the Adminis-
22 trator during design evaluations or design ju-
23 ries;

24 (3) where the design of an applicable Federal
25 public building is selected pursuant to a design-build

1 competition under section 3309 of title 41, United
2 States Code—

3 (A) list experience with classical architec-
4 ture or traditional architecture as specialized
5 experience and technical competence in the
6 phase-one solicitation; and

7 (B) give substantial weight to those factors
8 when evaluating which offerors will be advanced
9 to phase-two; and

10 (4) consistent with sections 4302 and 4312 of
11 title 5, United States Code, make advancing the pur-
12 poses and implementing the policies of this Act a
13 critical performance element in the individual per-
14 formance plans of the Chief Architect of the Admin-
15 istration and appropriate subordinate employees in
16 the Public Buildings Service involved in selecting de-
17 signs for applicable Federal public buildings.

18 (c) DESIGN COMPETITIONS.—In addition to the re-
19 quirements described in subsection (b)(3), if the Adminis-
20 trator intends to select a building design for an applicable
21 Federal building pursuant to a design competition, the Ad-
22 ministrator shall—

23 (1) actively recruit architectural firms;

1 (2) as applicable, recruit designers with experi-
 2 ence in classical architecture and traditional archi-
 3 tecture to enter the competition; and

4 (3) to the maximum extent practicable, ensure
 5 that multiple design modes are advanced to the final
 6 evaluation round.

7 (d) NOTIFICATION.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—If the Administrator pro-
 9 poses to approve a design for a new applicable Fed-
 10 eral public building that diverges from the preferred
 11 architecture, including Brutalist architecture,
 12 Deconstructivist architecture, or any design derived
 13 from or related to those styles of architecture, the
 14 Administrator shall submit to the Assistant to the
 15 President for Domestic Policy, not later than 30
 16 days before the date on which the Administrator
 17 could reject the design without incurring substantial
 18 expenditures, a notification in accordance with para-
 19 graph (2).

20 (2) REQUIREMENTS.—A notification submitted
 21 under paragraph (1) shall describe the reasons the
 22 Administrator proposes to approve a design de-
 23 scribed in that paragraph, including—

24 (A) a detailed explanation of why the Ad-
 25 ministrator believes selecting the design is justi-

1 fied, with particular focus on whether the de-
 2 sign is as beautiful and reflective of the dignity,
 3 enterprise, vigor, and stability of the system of
 4 self-government in the United States as alter-
 5 native designs of comparable cost using pre-
 6 ferred architecture;

7 (B) the total expected cost of adopting the
 8 proposed design, including estimated mainte-
 9 nance and replacement costs throughout the ex-
 10 pected lifecycle of the design; and

11 (C)(i) a description of the designs using
 12 preferred architecture seriously considered for
 13 the project; and

14 (ii) the total expected cost of adopting
 15 those designs, including estimated maintenance
 16 and replacement costs throughout the expected
 17 lifecycles of those designs.

18 **SEC. 6. GENERAL PROVISIONS.**

19 (a) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Nothing in this Act im-
 20 pairs or otherwise affects—

21 (1) the authority granted by law to an executive
 22 department or agency, or the head thereof; or

23 (2) the functions of the Director of the Office
 24 of Management and Budget relating to budgetary,
 25 administrative, or legislative proposals.

1 (b) IMPLEMENTATION.—This Act shall be imple-
2 mented consistent with applicable law and subject to the
3 availability of appropriations.

4 (c) NO CREATION OF RIGHT OR BENEFIT.—Nothing
5 in this Act creates any right or benefit, substantive or pro-
6 cedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party
7 against the United States, including—

8 (1) its departments, agencies, or entities;

9 (2) its officers, employees, or agents; or

10 (3) any other person.

11 **SEC. 7. ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS.**

12 Annually, the Administrator shall submit to the Com-
13 mittee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
14 of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Ac-
15 countability of the House of Representatives a report re-
16 lating to the carrying out of this Act, detailing adherence
17 to the policy of the United States described in section 2
18 and the Guiding Principles.

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