

Legislator of the Year Award Recipient- 2010



The AIA Nebraska Government Affairs Committee has established a biannual award to recognize outstanding legislative contributions to the profession and the practice of architecture by a member of the Nebraska Legislature. The Legislator of the Year will have demonstrated leadership and an active role in advancing the legislative priorities of AIA Nebraska.

"We are honored to present this first award to Senator Heath Mello of District 5, Omaha/Bellevue. Senator Mello has surfaced as a key leader in advancing sustainability and energy efficiency during his first term in the Unicameral," said Greg Smith, AIA, Chair, Government Affairs Committee. Senator Mello has also been instrumental in passage of legislation relating to economic development in Nebraska.

Senator Mello was elected to the Nebraska Legislature in 2008. He is a graduate of University of Nebraska-Lincoln (B.A. in political science), 2002. Senator Mello is a Community Development Specialist with Metro Community College. He is a member of the following organizations: St. Thomas More Parish; South Omaha Business Association; Q Merchants Association; South Omaha Optimists; South Omaha Development Project; South Omaha Neighborhood Alliance; Association of Fundraising Professionals; Knights of Columbus. Mello, married in May of this year.

Legislative Proposals Introduced:

- Nebraska Green Building Advantage Act, a bill that would have created new green building tax incentives for LEED certified buildings.
- Provide requirements relating to energy star certified appliances in the state's competitive bidding process (Law)
- Require cities' comprehensive plans to include an energy element (Law)
- Authorize the creation of sustainable energy financing districts by municipalities, Create both short and long-term green jobs through recycling and energy efficiency retrofitting.
- Enabling municipalities to establish Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs.

Other Issues of Interest:

Adoption of the 2009 International Energy Conservation Code

Energy Efficiency and Home Improvement Financing