



February 8, 2022

The Honorable William C. Wampler III
Chair of the House General Laws Sub-Committee: Subcommittee #2
Delegate, Virginia General Assembly
Pocahontas Building, Room E425
900 East Main Street
Richmond, VA 23219

RE: Support for HB 701, Uniform Statewide Building Code; local building codes and regulations; energy efficiency and conservation standards.

Dear Delegate Wampler III:

On behalf of the Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), I am writing to support allowing localities to use building code provisions and standards that are more stringent than those contained in the Uniform Statewide Building Code. COG supports efforts at the local and state levels to expand the adoption of energy efficient and zero energy building codes, which is consistent with COG's legislative priorities.

Climate change is a regional priority for COG, the association of local governments in metropolitan Washington. Since half of all greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the region are associated with the built environment, green building codes have significant potential to reduce emissions. While Virginia has adopted building codes that incorporate energy efficiency components outlined in the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC), local jurisdictions are not permitted to adopt more stringent codes that exceed state minimum standards ("stretch codes"). HB 701 would allow localities to use their own building code provisions and standards that are more stringent. Allowing localities to adopt more stringent building codes can be effective in significantly reducing the total energy consumption and increasing the level of on-site renewable energy generation of commercial, municipal, and residential buildings.

CEEPC, on behalf of COG, supports HB 701 as it would greatly facilitate local governments' efforts to reduce GHG emissions from the built environment. Please contact Jeffrey King, COG Director of Climate, Energy, and Air Programs at (202) 962-3238 or jking@mwkog.org if you have any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Koran Saines'.

Koran T. Saines
Chair, Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee

cc: Northern Virginia House Delegation members