



April 9, 2010

District of Columbia

Bladensburg\*

Bowie

College Park

Frederick

Frederick County

Gaithersburg

Greenbelt

Montgomery County

Prince George's County

Rockville

Takoma Park

Alexandria

Arlington County

Fairfax

Fairfax County

Falls Church

Loudoun County

Manassas

Manassas Park

Prince William County

Honorable Jay Fisetto, Chair  
COG Climate, Energy and Environment Policy Committee  
777 North Capitol Street, NE  
Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20002

Subject: Supporting Energy Efficient Building Codes

Dear Chair Fisetto:

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is committed to promoting and supporting implementation of technologies that foster a diverse supply of reliable, affordable, and economically sound energy resources for the Metropolitan Washington Region. The recently adopted Climate Change work program emphasizes the need for energy efficient building technologies as a key strategy for meeting our regional GHG reduction goals.

Long-lasting energy efficiency is only possible through **enforceable** energy conservation in building codes. The Intergovernmental Green Building Group (IGBG) is asking the Climate, Energy and Environmental Policy Committee to encourage its members to send staff from their jurisdictions to attend the International Code Council meeting in Charlotte, NC from October 28 – November 1, 2010 and vote in support of “The 30% Solution.”

In 2008, IGBG supported the adoption of “The 30% Solution,” a comprehensive package of proposals offered by the Energy Efficient Codes Coalition (EECC) that would have boosted the residential energy efficiency of the 2009 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) by 30% over its 2006 counterpart. Although this proposal did not receive the two-thirds majority vote necessary to include it in the 2009 IECC, many of its individual elements *were* adopted, producing an estimated 13-15% improvement over the 2006 IECC (the baseline year under consideration by Congress). Subsequently, the District of Columbia adopted a residential code patterned after “The 30% Solution.”

This fall in Charlotte, North Carolina, registered voting government members of the International Code Council (ICC) will vote on proposals that will be incorporated into a new 2012 IECC. The IGBG has been following the energy efficiency proposals and hopes to see them result in real improvements in the energy efficiency of buildings. If only the following first round recommendations are approved by the vote at the 2012 ICC codes in Charlotte, it is estimated that the nation will see:

1. A 30% boost in the 2012 IECC for commercial buildings<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> New Building Institute (NBI) estimate of energy savings from EC 147, which is jointly proposed by NBI, the US Department of Energy and the American Institute of Architects (AIA).

2. A 30% boost in the 2012 IECC for residential buildings, resulting from a combination of the US Department of Energy's comprehensive proposal and nine EECC energy saving proposals<sup>2</sup>,
3. The elimination of the ICC's "other" weaker model energy code, Chapter 11 of the International Residential Code (IRC), which would be replaced by the 2012 IECC.

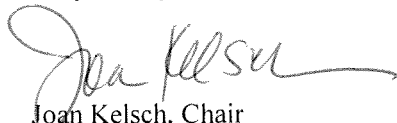
In addition, ICC Government Members have an opportunity to take residential energy improvements in the 2012 IECC to nearly 40% beyond its 2006 counterpart through the adoption of the EECC's entire group of code change proposals of "state of the shelf" improvements, called "The 30% Solution 2012." Because some of these code change proposals were narrowly recommended for disapproval in the first round of hearings, it will require a two-thirds majority for its inclusion in the 2012 IECC. "The 30% Solution 2012" incorporates everyday technologies that are proven to generate positive cash flow that more than recoup their initial investment.

We believe that the proposed strengthening of the energy code is consistent with Green Building recommendations and complements COG's strategic energy policy framework as one of the key focus areas for energy efficiency in building codes.

**Consequently, IGBG is recommending that COG encourage and financially support its members to participate in the Final Action Hearing in Charlotte, vote on the code changes to strengthen the energy efficiency in the 2012 IECC, and stand in opposition to proposals that weaken it.** Registered government voting members must be present in Charlotte to vote for each of the proposed code changes.

If you have any questions about the issue or about having staff from specific jurisdictions attend the meetings in Charlotte, please call me at 703-228-3599 or George Nichols at 202-962-3355.

Respectfully,



Joan Kelsch, Chair  
Intergovernmental Green Building Group  
(Green Building Program Manager, Arlington County, Virginia)

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<sup>2</sup> Cost Savings from Proposed IECC Code Changes for 2012, Report by ICF International