



1402 Third Ave Suite 1305 Seattle, WA 98101

September 21, 2012

Washington State Building Code Council
1500 Jefferson
Olympia, WA 98504

RE: Proposed 2012 Washington State Energy Code

Councilmembers:

Please consider the following comments regarding the proposed 2012 Washington State Energy Code:

- Climate Solutions advocates for practical and profitable solutions to global warming, operating programs focused on galvanizing leadership and bridging divides. One such program is Business Leaders for Climate Solutions where we have over 1000 business joining us throughout the Northwest to support policies that grow the clean energy economy;
- While we often talk about the importance of energy efficiency, the Legislature likely said it best in SB 5854 passed two years ago: “More than thirty percent of Washington's greenhouse gas emissions come from energy use in buildings. Making homes, businesses, and public institutions more energy efficient will save money, create good local jobs, enhance energy security, reduce pollution that causes global warming, and speed economic recovery while reducing the need to invest in costly new generation. Washington can spur its economy and assert its regional and national clean energy leadership by putting efficiency first.”
- One of the most important ways Washington has put “efficiency first” is through the adoption of our state’s energy code. The code has resulted in dramatic savings:
 - A house built today, uses 50% less energy/sq ft for heating than before codes came into effect in the 1990's.
 - Washington consumers and businesses are saving \$365 million/year in lower energy bills thanks to the energy code
- The energy code represents the most cost effective and certain means to improve energy efficiency for the long term. Buildings built today will be with us for 50 to 100 years. A good energy code is much more cost effective than trying to improve efficiency through retrofit programs later.
- While it's true that there are some additional costs when energy codes advance we have to keep in mind that the cost of electricity is steadily rising. The owners and occupants of highly energy efficient buildings will benefit through energy bill savings because utilities throughout the state are adopting rate increases - some 5%, 6% and even as high as 18%. And of course, none of today's energy prices reflect the true cost of carbon pollution. The more energy efficient our buildings, the less need for fossil fuel power plants - and the better equipped we are to both reduce GHG emissions and cope with the impacts of climate change.

- We support the Council's call for a fee increase and feel that such an increase is long overdue considering the vast body of important work conducted by the Council, particularly with regard to implementation of the Energy Code. Without a fee increase, the critical work of the Council that makes Washington's buildings some of the safest and most efficient in the country is at risk; we see an increase as a public health and safety necessity and draw the Council's attention to a letter Climate Solutions submitted to the Council dated September 7 again committing our support to such a proposal.

Thank you for considering our comments. If you have questions regarding these comments, please contact Jessica Finn Coven, 206.443.9570 X 20.