



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

1011 Plum Street SE • PO Box 42525 • Olympia, Washington 98504-2525 • (360) 725-4000
www.commerce.wa.gov

April 11, 2014

C. Ray Allshouse, Council Chair
Washington State Building Code Council
1500 Jefferson Avenue SE
P.O. Box 41449
Olympia, WA 98504-1449

Dear Chairman Allshouse,

I am writing you on behalf of the State Energy Office to urge your consideration of the proposed amendments to the International Residential Code in Washington for permitting of rooftop solar installations. I want to thank the Building Code Council for your work on the 2012 International Fire Code. Your process was open and deliberate, resulting in a thoughtful balance.

The proposed amendments are part of the Northwest Solar Communities project; a multi-year effort to reduce the red tape for rooftop solar through standardizing and streamlining permitting, interconnection, planning, zoning, siting, and improving financing across Washington State.

Including these proposals in the building code it will ensure clarity to builders, installers, code officials, and manufacturers on how solar should be managed for existing and new construction. The solar photovoltaic market in Washington is challenged by an assortment of permitting processes which causes uncertainty and increases risk, time, and most importantly cost. The proposed amendments are intended to create a standard, predictable, and consistent process across jurisdictions. The exemption criteria in the proposed amendments are consistent with best practices and apply to the most common systems.

Governor Inslee is determined to expand solar by bringing down the cost through innovation in government and components. We look forward to working with the Washington State Building Code Council to ensure the amendments are workable for everyone.

Sincerely,

Tony Usibelli,
Director, State Energy Office