



Moving America's Model Building Energy Code on a Path of Steady Efficiency Improvements Toward Net Zero

Resolution Number 49 – Adopted Unanimously on June 27, 2016

Sponsored by:

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WHEREAS, America's mayors have long recognized the importance of building energy efficiency in the development of a sound and successful national energy policy; and

WHEREAS, building energy codes set minimum efficiency requirements for newly constructed and renovated buildings, providing energy savings and emissions reductions over the life spans of buildings; and

WHEREAS, building energy codes are providing savings of more than 30% compared to codes of less than one decade ago; and

WHEREAS, energy costs to consumers from building energy codes are estimated at about \$5billion annually as of 2012, and

WHEREAS, homes and commercial buildings continue to be America's largest energy consuming sector - using 42% of the nation's energy, 54% of its natural gas and 71% of its electricity; and

WHEREAS, a cost benefit analysis supports a realistic payback period for any proposed energy efficiency improvements and the International Code Council (ICC) is currently facilitating its year-long triennial review and update of the 2015 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC), culminating this fall in voting by ICC Governmental Members represented by code and other officials from cities, counties and states; and

WHEREAS, mayors strongly supported efforts to strengthen the IECC (also known as America's Model Energy Code), which resulted in historic 38% gains in the efficiency of the 2012 and 2015 versions over 2006 baselines, and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Energy found that the 2012 and 2015 IECCs yielded "positive benefits for U.S. homeowners and significant energy savings for the nation," and that moving from the 2006 IECC to the most current IECCs generate life-cycle savings for homeowners averaging from \$4,763 to \$33,105 (depending on climate zone); and

WHEREAS, at its first round of code development hearings, the IECC Residential Energy Committee recommended efficiency rollbacks which, if accepted by governmental voting members, would result in a 2018 IECC that would be significantly weaker than the 2015 IECC and, in fact, would mark the first time an IECC update would be weaker than its predecessor; and

WHEREAS, following the 2016 fall online voting, the ICC's Public Comment Hearing (PCH) in Kansas City, governmental voting members, comprised primarily of municipal code officials, will consider these Residential Energy Committee recommendations for inclusions in the 2018 IECC; and

WHEREAS, the nature of the voting membership of the ICC puts mayors in a unique position to encourage the eligible code officials from their cities to participate in the ICC deliberations and vote against efficiency rollbacks and trade-offs in the IECC and in support of reasonable efficiency measures; and

WHEREAS, mayors have endorsed the goals, principles, and efficiency recommendations of the broad-based Energy Efficient Codes Coalition (EECC), whose supporters include government; low-income housing; national efficiency NGOs; regional efficiency organizations; business and labor; consumer and environmental groups; architects; manufacturers; and all forms of utilities, and

WHEREAS, the EECC has proposed a new approach to future code improvements - called "Builder Flex Points" - which allows homebuilders the flexibility to choose from a menu of options to incrementally achieve 5% or more in energy savings with each additional code version once they have complied with the envelope requirements in the 2015 IECC's prescriptive path; and

WHEREAS, the benefits of sustained progress were evidenced by an analysis by the non-profit Institute for Electric Efficiency (IEE) found that continued savings of the magnitude of recent efficiency gains in building energy codes and appliance standards "will completely offset the anticipated growth in demand in America's residential, commercial, and industrial sectors combined, eliminating the need for additional power plants to serve these sectors through 2025;" and

WHEREAS, the IEE's findings were confirmed in a *Financial Times* interview with the CEO of Duke Energy, who stated that "improvements in energy efficiency for buildings and appliances appear to have broken the traditional connection between electricity demand and economic growth," and

WHEREAS, Americans support sustained efficiency gains, as evidenced by a February 2013 National Association of Homebuilders survey of what home buyers want found that "nine out of ten buyers would rather buy a home with energy-efficient features and permanently lower utility bills than one without those features that costs 2% to 3% less"; and

WHEREAS, continuing efficiency gains in the 2018 and future IECCs will strongly influence efficiency performance of millions of U.S. homes over their long 70-100 year lives.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors opposes the adoption of proposals that roll back the 2015 IECC's level of efficiency; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors support the adoption of EECC's Builder Flex Points proposal and its modest 5% boost in efficiency for the 2018 IECC; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The U.S. Conference of Mayors encourages municipal support for all eligible code officials to attend these hearings and to vote in favor of continued and future efficiency gains for America's model energy code, the IECC.