

Coalition for the Adoption of a Unified Code (CAUC)

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American Council of
Engineering Companies
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Engineers Coalition

American Institute of
Architects,
Connecticut Chapter

American Society of
Landscape Architects,
Connecticut Chapter

Associated Builders and
Contractors, Connecticut

Associated General
Contractors of Connecticut

Connecticut Association
of Land Surveyors

Connecticut Association
of REALTORS, Inc.

Connecticut Building
Officials Association "CBOA"

Connecticut Energy
Efficiency Fund

Connecticut Fire Marshals
Association "CFMA"

Connecticut Property
Owners Association "CPOA"

Home Builders Association
of Connecticut

International Council of
Shopping Centers

International Masonry
Institute

National Association of
Industrial and Office
Properties

Change to Building Code Statute CGA 29-256a

Please Support Raised Bill 6284 Offered by Public Safety Committee

Background: PA 07-242, sec. 78 amended a building code statute (29-256a), with language that requires certain green building construction practices as of January 1, 2009. Despite the good intention of this legislation, in its current state, its confusing language makes it unworkable. **The design and construction industry does not know how to comply with the language as it now stands; building code officials and the Department of Public Safety are challenged by it; and the Attorney General's office has identified a number of enforcement problems. Moreover, the inability to implement this legislation is causing the delay of private projects.**

Changes in Proposed Amendment:

*Change the effective date by referencing the effective date of the next State Building Code, rather than an arbitrary date in the statute. The State Building Code is updated on a 3-4 year cycle. A simple change in the statute will correct the disconnect between this statutory construction requirement and the requirements of the State Building Code. Without this date change, owners and builders would have to change their construction plans in the middle of ongoing projects on which building permits have already been issued. Without this change, delayed projects will adversely affect government revenues.

* Because they are constantly changing, it is not a sound idea to reference specific green building rating systems in statute. For flexibility, the proposal does add the NAHB National Green Building Standard for residential structures to LEED™ and Green Globes™ and references the overall rating systems only to allow the State Codes and Standards committee to establish details of appropriateness.

*Similarly, the proposal identifies the thermal envelope, mechanical and electrical systems, and lighting for consideration within these rating systems, as these are the only areas regulated by the building code. "Green" factors (e.g., obtaining lumber from a sustainable forest, use of bike racks, size of buildings) are not regulated by the State Building Code. Sec 29-256a should be limited to building code matters. A verification of compliance requirement for the relevant portions of the rating systems has been added.

*"Building construction standards consistent with" LEED, Green Globes, National Green Building Standard, or an equivalent rating system needs to be defined in the building code. Thus, specific authority for the Codes & Standards Committee and State Building Inspector should be granted to identify these standards.

*Exemption language in 29-256a is not necessary, and reference to the Institute for Sustainable Energy (ISE) should be removed. The ISE, one professor and some student interns at Eastern Connecticut State University, is not equipped to conduct the analyses required on exemption requests. The existing project-specific code modification process is sufficient to handle exemptions.

* To match existing definitions in the State Building Code, confusing statutory language has been changed, such as "renovation" to "alteration". The Codes and Standards committee may determine a more objective and reasonable basis for the thresholds for impacted projects, such as square footage rather than size.

The design and construction industry and code officials have come together to propose corrective language. Please Support This Improvement to the Building Code Statute!

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