DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106-1658

Joseph Cassidy, State Building Inspector /Director of Design and Construction
Energy & Technology Committee
March 4, 2014

An Act Concerning State Building Code

Raised Senate Bill 352 **Section 1** changes the timeframe for adoption of a new edition of the model code from *eighteen to twelve months,* requires the State Building Code to incorporate the 2015 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) on or before January of 2015, and deletes the State Building Inspector/Codes& Standards discretion in considering whether to adopt a newer edition of the model code. These changes are, at best, impractical. Given the length of time needed for approval of a completed regulation, this timeframe leaves no time for technical review, coordination with statutory requirements, or public input. Removal of the discretion over adoption could lead to a waste of resources by both the State and the construction industry in adopting a version that make little to no change or improvement over the prior version. It sets up a paradigm where we would be adopting a new edition simply because it exists, whether or not it was in the best interest of the citizens of the State. DAS is opposed not only as the agency responsible for code adoption along with Codes and Standards, but also for the various industries that rely on these code series remaining consistent and predictable.

I think it would be useful for the committee to understand the process undertaken to adopt a new model code:

> First, a model code family is identified as having significant changes to warrant adoption. Our public proposal process starts with advertizing our intent to adopt a new code and an invitation to submit technical proposals for specific changes to that model code. All proposals are reviewed and the technical merits of each proposal are vetted, including presentations by the proposer or other experts if necessary. A proposal could be assigned to technical subcommittee if detailed study is warranted.
>
> Concurrent with this process, changes in the new model from the current code are reviewed to ensure they are not in conflict with any statuary requirement, and that they practically work for Connecticut. Coordination with the Fire Safety Code and the Fire Prevention Code takes place at this point to insure that requirements in all three codes are aligned.
>
> At the end of these processes, the Connecticut Supplement is drafted. The Supplement includes all approved technical changes from the review processes, as well as all statutory and administrative requirements. The finished document is then presented to the Governor's Office for submission to the Regulation Review Committee.

We have recently completed the 2013 Amendment to the 2005 State Building Code which includes adoption of the 2009 International Residential Code and the 2011 National Electrical Code.

Codes and Standards along with my staff are currently completing the technical review of the 2012 edition of the ICC model codes for adoption as the next State Building Code. We anticipate that this will be ready for submission in early 2014. We believe this level of progress on the cycle of revisions validates our agency goal of maintaining coordination between the building and fire safety codes as promised to the design and construction communities that rely on us. This proposal would undermine that continuity.

DAS cannot support this proposal.

An Act Concerning Energy Efficient Building Standards and Product Efficiency Standards"

Section 1 of Raised Senate Bill 357 proposes to remove municipalities and towns from having to comply with the State Building Code and allow for alternative standards to be adopted by the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection. DAS is not opposed to sections 2 and 3 of the bill and will have collaborative discussions with the interested parties and proponents regarding section 1 of the bill.

This proposal would allow towns to adopt alternative high performance standards. This concept originates from Massachusetts, where they have a history of allowing jurisdictions to adopt their own standards. Trying to determine among options whether a building is in compliance may create difficulties for the local Building Official responsible for certifying the compliance.

The intent when the State Building Code was first enacted as a statewide code in the early 1970's was to have a uniform code throughout the state. The State Building Code is intended to be a minimum standard to which buildings are built.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. Please don't hesitate to contact me, our legislative staff, Terrence Tulloch-Reid if the Committee needs additional information.