

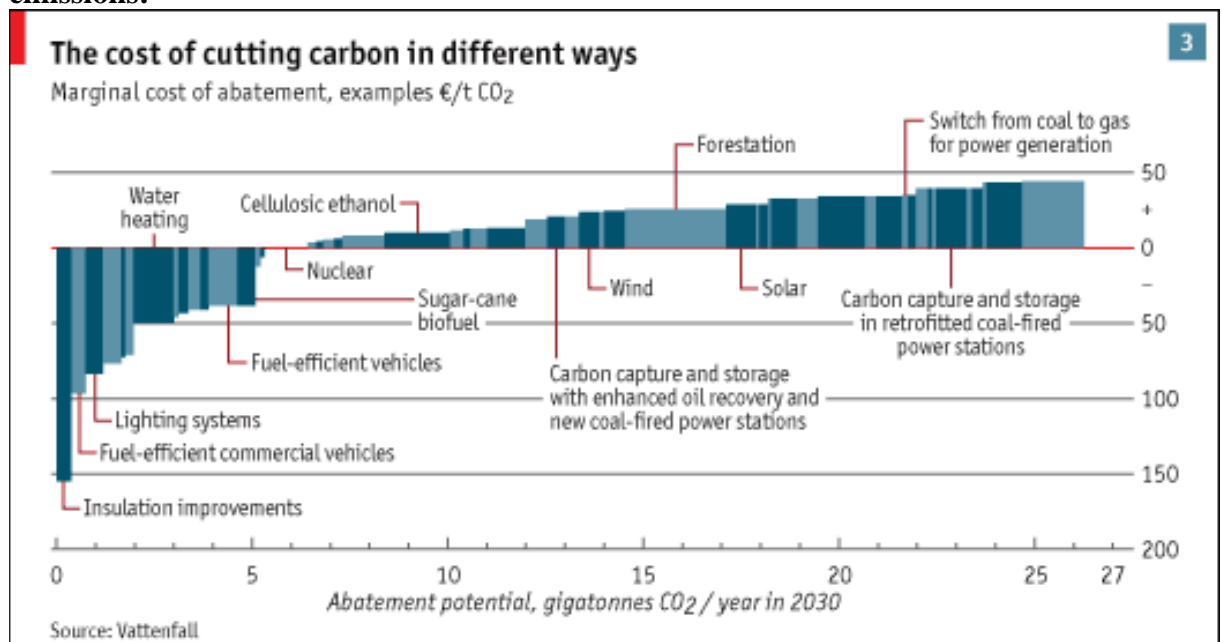
# The Case for Strengthening DC's Building Energy Codes

- 1) **Strengthening building codes is vital to the success of efforts to fight climate change and improve America's energy efficiency.** Global warming and energy security are two of the greatest challenges of our time. Building energy codes are among the most powerful tools in rising to and meeting these challenges.
- 2) **Action is urgent.** Mayor Fenty and 753 other mayors have signed the U.S. Conference of Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement, pledging to reduce their cities' greenhouse gas emissions to 7 percent below 1990 levels by 2012.

We can't hope to meet this ambitious pledge *without* improving energy efficiency in homes and buildings, which account for over 40% of America's total energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions and around ¾ of its electricity. In DC, buildings account for about 75% of greenhouse gas emissions.

Because new buildings last for decades, making improvements to energy efficiency *today* is a critical element to meeting future environmental and energy-saving goals.

- 3) **Strengthening energy codes is achievable and cost effective.** In its May 31st 2007 issue, *The Economist* wrote "SOME ways of cutting carbon are cheaper than others. So, at different carbon prices, different sorts of methods of abatement become worthwhile. Vattenfall, a Swedish power utility, has tried to quantify which ones would be worth undertaking at what price." The chart below shows how steps incorporated into more energy efficient building codes are among the most cost effective measures we can take to reduce carbon emissions:



Studies by McKinsey & Company have similarly concluded that constructing buildings to be more energy efficient is extremely cost-effective and long

**overdue. The energy savings more than pay for themselves. See [www.nytimes.com/2007/11/30/college/coll30green.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/30/college/coll30green.html)**