
IECC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS STRONGER ENERGY CODES FOR U.S. HOMES AND COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

[The Institute for Market Transformation](#) (IMT), the Washington, DC-based nonprofit dedicated to improving the energy efficiency of buildings, applauds the International Code Council (ICC) for supporting building energy code proposals that would dramatically reduce the energy consumption of U.S. homes and commercial buildings.

At its Codes Forum hearings last week in Baltimore, the IECC (International Energy Conservation Code) Development Committee recommended the adoption of comprehensive code proposals for homes and commercial buildings that would result in energy efficiency gains approaching 30%. The IECC is a model code recognized in federal law, green building standards and a majority of states. The IECC Development Committee recommendations will be submitted to the ICC's Final Action Hearings next year, where they will be voted on by ICC member officials.

IMT, a member of the broad-based [Energy Efficient Codes Coalition](#) (EECC), worked in partnership with EECC and other efficiency advocates to ensure the code proposals were recommended for adoption through testimony, campaigning and other actions (see [IMT's letter](#) to the ICC supporting stronger building energy codes.)

“Advanced building energy codes promote energy-efficient construction practices in millions of new and retrofitted homes and commercial buildings, creating and preserving jobs with minimal effect on total construction costs,” said Cliff Majersik, executive director of IMT. “We commend the IECC Development Committee for its support of stronger energy codes and urge the approval of these proposals at the ICC's Final Action Hearings next year.”

Strong residential codes will also save homeowners money. IMT previously contributed to research that found mortgages on energy-efficient homes have an 11% lower rate of default and delinquency. The multi-variable regression analysis of millions of mortgages produced statistically significant results with a 99% confidence interval. “Advanced energy codes result in lower utility bills for consumers, saving homeowners hundreds of dollars every year in energy costs that can instead be used to help pay their mortgages,” Majersik said. “Energy-efficient homes will help prevent a recurrence of our current foreclosure crisis and its devastating impact on the construction industry.”

[IECC Development Committee Recommends Adoption of EC-13, EC-147, EC-157 and EC-165](#)

The IECC Development Committee heard extensive testimony on five comprehensive package proposals, including one from the U.S. Department of Energy and EECC's “30Plus.” It recommended the DOE proposal (EC-13) for adoption.

“America owes a huge debt of gratitude to the IECC Development Committee for elevating energy

efficiency to the importance our national energy policy warrants,” said William Fay, executive director of EECC. “By voting for a substantial boost in new home energy efficiency, the committee has confronted one of the last frontiers of wasted energy.”

Both of these similar packages focused on readily achievable improvements which would be simple to enforce and generate significant energy cost savings and greater comfort to homeowners. Independent estimates put the DOE proposal’s savings at 25% to 30% and the savings of “30Plus” at 30% to 35% beyond the 2006 IECC.

“Because the DOE package preceded “30Plus” on the agenda, EECC threw its considerable support behind it,” Fay added. “After recommending its adoption, the IECC committee then adopted nine individual proposals from EECC that brought the package close to the 30% goal.” Support for adopting DOE first, then also adopting the stronger “30Plus” came from:

- U.S. Conference of Mayors Chair Greg Nickels
- New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson
- Builders: Washington, D.C., homebuilder Ethan Landis; New York City green affordable multi-housing developer Carlton Brown, BuiltGreenNM, and the Santa Fe Area Home Builders Association
- Low Income and Affordable Housing Advocates including the National Housing Institute
- The National Association of State Energy Officials
- National energy leaders like the Alliance to Save Energy, American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy, Institute for Market Transformation, New Buildings Institute and United Nations
- Additional EECC members, including utilities, environmental and energy consumer groups, businesses, labor, cities, counties, regional energy efficiency alliances and others.

For commercial buildings, the IECC committee also recommended adoption of the comprehensive package EC-147, proposed by New Buildings Institute (NBI), DOE and the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and based on [NBI’s Core Energy Code](#). EC-147, together with the approved proposals EC-157 and EC-165, would result in energy efficiency gains in commercial buildings approaching 30%. Core Energy Code combines recently developed addenda to ASHRAE 90.1 with NBI’s Core Performance® Guide, which was published in 2007 and is already referenced in several local building ordinances and state codes, as well as in voluntary utility programs and the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED program.

“This is a significant action that recognizes the role of building codes in reducing the nation’s greenhouse gas emissions. The IECC clearly understands that investments in energy-efficient buildings are a cost-effective path to a lower-carbon future,” said Jim Edelson of the New Buildings Institute.

If they are upheld by the ICC Final Action Hearings in 2010, the IECC proposals recommended for adoption will nearly meet the 30% target included in legislation that has cleared both the full House of Representatives and the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee. The building sector

accounts for nearly 40% of U.S. energy usage and greenhouse gas emissions.

Less Stringent Efficiency Requirements of the Energy Chapter of the IRC Could Be Replaced by IECC

On Oct. 26, Colorado code official Shaunna Mozingo and Virginia code official Guy Tomberlin led a successful effort to replace the weaker Energy chapter of the International Residential Code (IRC), often promoted for state adoption by efficiency opponents, with the stronger IECC's model energy code. "With federal funding to states under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) requiring both the adoption of a residential energy code that meets or exceeds the most recent IECC and 90% state code compliance by 2017, states need the consistency of a single model energy code," Mozingo said. Alliance to Save Energy President Kateri Callahan praised the IECC Development Committee for its focus on improving new home energy efficiency by 30%. Callahan noted, "The benefits of a 30% boost in energy efficiency for both residential and commercial buildings through 2030 are mind-boggling:

- Cumulative energy savings of at least 3 quadrillion Btu saved nationwide,
- 150 million metric tons of avoided CO₂,
- Annual homeowner savings of \$25 billion from reducing wasted energy."

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE FOR MARKET TRANSFORMATION

The Institute for Market Transformation (IMT) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the promotion of energy efficiency, green building and environmental protection in the United States and abroad. Our activities include technical and market research, educational outreach, and the crafting of building codes and other policy and program initiatives. Much of IMT's work addresses market failures that inhibit investment in efficiency and green buildings. For more information, visit www.imt.org.

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