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Cc: Clai Porter <ncp@gci.net>

Subject: Statewide Building Code

Representatives:

As someone involved in housing in Alaska, I support a State Residential Building Code.

HB76 would adopt a State Residential Building Code in the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation. As a Past Vice-Chairman of the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation and a Design/Build Professional I would urge you to give this bill your consideration and support in order to improve the quality of home construction throughout the State.

This bill is good because it is a simple first step. With no penalties or enforcement measures in this bill, HB76 simply establishes a code that encourages Alaskans to build and buy homes that are well constructed, safe, and energy efficient.

Benefits to Consumers:

Having one statewide code allows product manufacturers to benefit from economies of scale, as the same product or set of products will comply with the code in all parts of the State. This can result in cost savings which can be passed on to the consumer. Home buyers would have the security of knowing any home built in the State meets a widely-accepted minimum standard for construction. As new editions of a code are adopted Statewide, consumers benefit from homes that can incorporate new, improved and/or innovative building products, materials and methods of construction.

Benefits to State of Alaska:

A Statewide code can reduce insurance costs across the State, as all communities may benefit from improved ISO ratings. Having a code adopted at the State level saves resources at the Local level, as individual communities will not have to spend time and financial resources going through a separate code review, amendment and adoption process. There is also increasing pressure to link Federal mitigation grants and other disaster assistance to the adoption of building codes. If such a linkage were established, states with a statewide code would be eligible for more grant funding and more disaster assistance than states without a statewide code.

Benefits to Builders:

Builders who work in multiple cities or boroughs benefit from the consistency in requirements provided by adopting a Statewide code. When code adoption happens at the local level, a builder working in multiple communities and jurisdictions may end up having to comply with a patchwork of codes, code editions, and local amendments. This can lead to more rounds of plan review and debates with building officials over local interpretations. A consistent set of Statewide Building Codes can lead to more consistent enforcement across the State, and thus fewer conflicts between builders and building officials.

In conclusion, thank you for your consideration of this matter. If you would find it helpful to discuss anything regarding HB76 or Statewide Building Codes in general with me, please send me an email at ncp@gci.net.

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