



ALASKA FIRE CHIEF'S ASSOCIATION

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March 9, 2010

Senator Joe Paskvan
Chairman, Senate Labor and Commerce Committee
State Capitol Room 7
Juneau AK, 99801

Reference: CS SB129

Dear Senator Paskvan,

As per your request yesterday, the Alaska Fire Chief's Association has reviewed the document titled "A Side-By Side Comparison of the Public Process: Current Statute vs. Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 129". This document compares the minimum requirements that are required by AS 29.25.020 for a Municipality to adopt an ordinance to the proposed requirements in CS SB129. However it fails to provide all of the information for a true comparison.

The critical missing piece are the local Building Code adoption processes currently in place that far exceed the minimum requirements for simple ordinance adoption.

This process, outlined for four of the deferred communities in an attached document, shows the importance placed on Building Code adoption and the extraordinary steps that communities go through to ensure that all affected parties including building officials, fire officials, builders, architects, engineers, and most importantly building owners have a mechanism to have input and influence in Local Building Code adoption. More detailed information on all of the deferred communities can be provided if requested.

The "Side-By-Side" comparison does not address the requirement of CS SB129 that a cost benefit analysis be conducted and the costs involved. No other ordinance adoption process that a local community undertakes, which many have a far greater impact on residents, does the State of Alaska require a community to conduct a cost benefit analysis. Based on the importance local communities place on Building Code adoption it should be left to those jurisdictions to determine if this is a needed process, not imposed by the State.

Sincerely,

Jeff Tucker, President
Alaska Fire Chief's Association



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March 10, 2010

Representatives Bob Herron and Cathy Munoz
Co-Chairs, House Community & Regional Affairs Committee
State Capitol Room 411
Juneau AK, 99801

Reference: CS HB202

Dear Rep. Herron and Rep. Munoz,

The Alaska Fire Chief's Association has had the opportunity to review CS HB202 and while the bill differs from HB202 the Alaska Fire Chief's Association continues to stand opposed to this bill.

CS SB129, which mirrors CS HB202, has already heard testimony in opposition from the Cities of Kenai, Juneau, Ketchikan, Kodiak, Seward, Sitka, the Fairbanks North Star and the Matanuska-Susitna Boroughs, as well as resolutions passed by the Alaska Municipal League and the Kodiak Island Borough supporting the ability of Alaskan communities to adopt codes and ordinances at the local level.

The State does not place this extraordinary burden on local communities for other ordinance adoption processes. Why is it that the State feels it necessary to do so when a community is trying to determine how best to provide life safety services to its residents? When a municipality adopts building codes there are already in place robust processes that involve community members, building officials, contractors, fire officials, architects, engineers, and others who are best able to determine the needs of the local community. Testimony will be given that outlines the extraordinary steps that a municipality goes through to adopt codes above and beyond a typical ordinance adoption.

There is no State need met by requiring local communities to add additional requirements and expense to their current process. No other ordinance adoption process has the requirement to do a cost benefit analysis. There are actions that a local government takes that have a far greater financial impact to their residents and the community as a whole that the State of Alaska does not require a municipality to undertake the unfunded expense of conducting a cost benefit analysis.

The Alaska Fire Chief's Association again, stands opposed to the adoption of CS HB202

Sincerely,

Jeff Tucker, President
Alaska Fire Chief's Association

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "Jeff Tucker", written over a horizontal line.



Fairbanks North Star Borough

Office of the Mayor

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March 9, 2010

The Honorable Joe Paskvan
Chairman, Senate Labor and Commerce Committee
State Capitol Room 7
Juneau, AK 99801

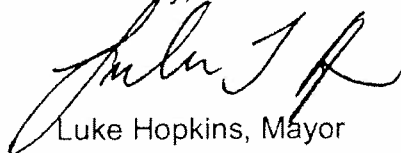
Subject: SB 129 Residential Sprinklers

Dear Senator Paskvan and Committee Members:

As Mayor of the Fairbanks North Star Borough, I am writing in opposition to SB 129 "An Act relating to state and municipal building code requirements for fire sprinklers in certain residential buildings". Adoption of local ordinances is a public process and hot topics such as residential sprinkler systems would attract great public participation and scrutiny. It is just as onerous to require residential sprinkler systems as it is to require municipalities to absorb the costs of a cost-benefit analysis. I add my voice in support of the Alaska Municipal League's Resolution 2010-04 which supports the ability of Alaskan communities to adopt code and ordinances at the local level to require the installation of fire sprinkler systems in new residential construction.

It is very unusual that the state is interfering in what is clearly a local decision and decision making process, a process that is working without the need for the state to amend Title 29. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on this legislation.

Sincerely,



Luke Hopkins, Mayor



Plumbers & Pipefitters U.A. Local Union 262

1751 Anka Street

Juneau, Alaska 99801

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E-mail: lu262bm@uanet.org



March 4, 2010

The Honorable Rob Herron
House of Representatives
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Herron:

My name is Max Mielke. I am the Business Manager of the United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 262 and I oppose HB 202.

I represent 100 journeyman and apprentices throughout SE Alaska. I'm also a 56 year resident of Alaska. From 1983-2003, I was a volunteer firefighter in Juneau. The last 5 years as a volunteer firefighter I was a District Chief.

Because of my first hand experience as a fire fighter I have seen the devastating and long lasting effects to life and property due to fire. I have friends who have lost everything in a fire. Automatic sprinkler systems not only save thousands of lives but billions of dollars in property each year. National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) believes fire sprinkler systems are expensive. I tend to disagree. We have contractors, who are signatory with Plumbers & Pipefitters UA Local 262, who say installation of a residential sprinkler system costs on average one percent of the total cost of the house and could be done much cheaper if the home owner installs it themselves.

NAHB says residential construction technology over the last 20 years has dramatically dropped the number of fatal fires in Alaska and the US. I would like to point out that residential construction is only part of the equation. It's also a combination of education, smoke detectors and sprinkler systems.

I believe it should be left up to local municipalities to make their own decisions on residential fire sprinkler systems. These processes are already in place and are dealt with on a case by case basis at the local level.

Sincerely,

Max R. Mielke
Business Manager
UA Local 262

Cc: Representatives Johnson, Millett, Tuck, Stoltze, Johansen, Keller, Crawford, Munoz, Foster, Ramras, P. Wilson, Kelly, Kelly, Dahlstrom, Harris, Gatto



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**ALASKA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE
RESOLUTION #2010-04**

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE ABILITY OF ALASKAN COMMUNITIES TO
ADOPT CODES AND ORDINANCES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL TO REQUIRE THE
INSTALLATION OF FIRE SPRINKLER SYSTEMS IN ALL NEWLY CONSTRUCTED
ONE- AND TWO- FAMILY DWELLINGS AND TOWNHOMES**

WHEREAS, the Alaska Municipal League is an organization that advocates for local control with regards to Alaska's municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Municipal League considers it unacceptable that in the 21st century, more than 3,000 people in the United States are killed in fires each year, with an average of 80% of these deaths occurring in home fires; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Municipal League understands that a person is 80% less likely to die in a house fire if sprinklers are present; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Municipal League understands that nationally 37% of home fire deaths were in homes with working smoke alarms; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Municipal League understands that sprinklers reduce the average property loss by 66% per fire; and

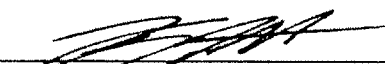
WHEREAS, the Alaska Municipal League knows that home fire sprinklers can significantly reduce the risk of injury and death to responding firefighters at home fires; and

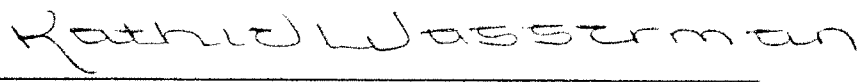
WHEREAS, the Alaska Municipal League desire to have a positive and consequential impact on reducing losses due to fire; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Municipal League recognizes that fire sprinklers represent a proven, reliable, affordable, efficient and effective method of protecting life and property in both commercial and residential occupancies.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska Municipal League supports the option for Alaskan communities to adopt codes and ordinances at the local level to require the installation of fire sprinkler systems in all newly constructed one- and two- family dwellings and townhomes to meet their unique local needs.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Alaska Municipal League on this 20th day of November, 2009.

Signed: 
Mayor Bert Cottle, President, Alaska Municipal League

Attest: 
Kathie Wasserman, Executive Director, Alaska Municipal League

Introduced by: Manager Gifford
Requested by: Chief Himes
Drafted by: AML
Introduced on: 01/07/2010
Adopted on: 01/07/2010

**KODIAK ISLAND BOROUGH
RESOLUTION NO. FY2010-20**

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE ABILITY OF ALASKAN COMMUNITIES TO ADOPT
CODES AND ORDINANCES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL TO REQUIRE THE INSTALLATION
OF FIRE SPRINKLER SYSTEMS IN ALL NEWLY CONSTRUCTED
ONE AND TWO FAMILY DWELLINGS AND TOWNHOMES**

WHEREAS, the Kodiak Island Borough is dedicated to public safety; and

WHEREAS, the Kodiak Island Borough considers it unacceptable that in the 21st Century, more than 3,000 people in the United States are killed in fires each year, with an average of 80% of these deaths occurring in home fires; and

WHEREAS, the Kodiak Island Borough understands that a person is 80% less likely to die in a house fire if sprinklers are present; and

WHEREAS, the Kodiak Island Borough understands that nationally 37% of home fire deaths were in homes with working smoke alarms; and

WHEREAS, the Kodiak Island Borough understands that sprinklers reduce the average property loss by 66% per fire; and

WHEREAS, the Kodiak Island Borough understands that fire sprinklers are now more affordable with a national average of \$1.61 per square foot of sprinklered new construction; and

WHEREAS, the Kodiak Island Borough knows that home fire sprinklers can significantly reduce the risk of injury and death to responding firefighters at home fires; and

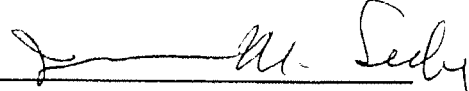
WHEREAS, the Kodiak Island Borough desires to have a positive and consequential impact on reducing losses due to fire; and

WHEREAS, the Kodiak Island Borough recognizes that fire sprinklers represent a proven, reliable, affordable, efficient, and effective method of protecting life and property in both commercial and residential occupancies.


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Kodiak Island Borough supports the option for Alaskan communities to adopt codes and ordinances at the local level to require the installation of fire sprinkler systems in all newly constructed one- and two- family dwellings and townhomes to meet their unique local needs.

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47 ADOPTED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE KODIAK ISLAND BOROUGH
48 THIS SEVENTH DAY OF JANUARY 2010
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50 KODIAK ISLAND BOROUGH
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54 Jerome M. Selby, Borough Mayor
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56 ATTEST:
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60 Nova M. Javier, MMC, Borough Clerk



INSURANCE SERVICES OFFICE, INC.

4B Eves Drive, Suite 200, Marlton, NJ 08053
856-985-5600 FAX 800-955-2422

December 7, 2009

Mr. Anthony C. Apfelbeck
Fire Marshal/Building Official
City of Altamonte Springs
225 Newburyport Avenue
Altamonte Springs, FL 32701

Dear Mr. Apfelbeck:

As per your request to provide some clarity on the effect of deciding to not incorporate the new national building code 'requirement' of single-family residential fire sprinkler systems. ISO has a procedure that reduces the Needed Fire Flow for new subdivisions that might be built to code with NFPA 13D systems. The procedure is as follows:

"Where all 1- and 2-family dwellings in an entire subdivision or other definable area are protected with a residential fire sprinkler system meeting the requirements of NFPA 13D, "Installation of Sprinkler Systems for One- and Two-Family Dwellings and Mobile Homes", a reduction in the Needed Fire Flow may be appropriate. Where evidence is available from local fire or building officials, to document the installation of these systems according to the Standard, the Needed Fire Flow for such subdivisions or areas may be reduced to 500 gpm."

Typically an action such as this would reduce the fire demand and tend to make it easier for the water system – supply works, main capacity and hydrant distribution to meet the lower fire demand. Therefore, the adoption of a model building code containing a residential sprinkler requirement would tend to improve or lower FSRS credit points or a given Public Protection Classification, all other things being equal.

In addition ISO is in the process of drafting a revision to the FSRS that may include extra credit for adoption of a model building code with 1- and 2- family residential sprinkler requirements.

The purpose the ISO Public Protection Classification (PPC™) Program is to gather information needed to determine a fire insurance classification that may be used in the calculation of property insurance premiums. It is not for property loss prevention or life safety purposes and no life safety or property loss prevention recommendations will be made.

The Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS®) is another community mitigation program administered by ISO. The BCEGS program gathers information on building code enforcement and adoption to develop a building classification similar to the PPC class. Insurers may use the BCEGS classification as a factor in their underwriting and rate making process. The residential BCEGS classification will be one class less favorable when the community decides to amend the adopted code by removing the residential sprinkler requirements.

Additionally insurers use a Homeowners Policy Program Manual to determine the cost of homeowner insurance. This Manual is published by ISO, and approved by the Department of Insurance in each state including Florida. The manual allows an insurer to give up to an 8% discount for homes with residential fire sprinkler systems installed according to NFPA 13D.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Skip Gibson", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Hugh "Skip" H. Gibson, IV
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