

Statewide Fire Prevention Code - Proposed Phase
Comments



May 9, 2023

Ms. Cindy Davis
Deputy Director of Building and Fire Regulations
Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development
600 East Main Street, Suite 300
Richmond, VA 23219

Via Email to kyle.flanders@dhcd.virginia.gov

Dear Deputy Director Davis,

The International Code Council (ICC) offers this letter in support of the finalization and adoption of the 2021 Uniform Statewide Building Code and Statewide Fire Prevention Code, based on the 2021 International Codes. Regarding the Industrialized Building Safety Regulations, we offer support of the first ever statewide adoption of the *ICC/MBI Standard 1200-2021: Standard for Off-Site Construction: Planning, Design, Fabrication, and Assembly* and *ICC/MBI Standard 1205-2021: Standard for Off-Site Construction: Inspection and Regulatory Compliance*; The Code Council commends the work of the State Building Code Office to ensure the health and wellbeing of the residents of the Commonwealth of Virginia through its commitment to adopting the most recent editions of codes and standards.

The application of strong building codes and standards plays a large part in ensuring Virginia's communities remain safe and strong for generations to come. The reality is, science and technology are constantly changing; and, as a result, the building community also needs to stay current with construction standards for the safety and economic benefit of Virginia.

The Commonwealth has been a leader in supporting innovation in design and construction while maintaining safety, resilience, and sustainability priorities. The regulation of off-site construction is a prime example. The Department has been a model for jurisdictions across the country. Many of the practices already deployed by the Department are reflected in the ICC/MBI 1200 and 1205 standards. Formally adopting these standards helps assure that the Commonwealth is incorporating best practices into its program and recognizes the important role of regulatory consistency in unlocking the efficiencies inherent in off-site construction.

The International Code Council is happy to have the Commonwealth of Virginia as a partner in the national pursuit of resilient and efficient construction. We are happy to offer assistance as needed by the Department as implementation proceeds.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lisa Berger".

Lisa Berger
Government Relations Manager
International Code Council

Board of Housing and Community Development Meeting
December 12, 2022

My name is Keith Brower. I am the former Fire Chief and Fire Marshal from Loudoun County and I am writing in representation of myself. Although I am no longer a resident of Virginia, I still maintain significant personal interests in the Commonwealth.

At the past Board of Housing and Community Development meeting on October 3, 2022, Board of Housing members met to consider code proposals for the 2021 Virginia Code adoption process. I am writing to strongly object to the process that was used in this process.

The process that was utilized to update the fire and building codes through the Department of Housing and Community Development Board silenced the voices of the Virginia Fire Service and the many members of committees and subcommittees who spend countless days and hours participating in the code development process. By not allowing discussion, testimony and consideration on non-consensus code proposals, our voices were silenced. Many of these code proposals were extremely important to the safety of firefighters and the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Members of the Board of Housing and Community Development voted to bypass discussion and not allow the voice of Virginia's Fire Service to be heard surrounding the many common sense safety measures, many of which have dramatic life safety proposals. In a process where it only takes one person in a sub-workgroup for a code proposal to be considered non-consensus, this is hardly a collaborative process.

As board of housing members, you have an obligation to represent all the citizens in the Commonwealth of Virginia in advancing the life safety of our citizens and you failed in this process.

At a time when the United States Fire Administrator is calling for stronger building and fire prevention codes throughout America, this action to totally disallow debate is tone deaf, irresponsible, and counter to the moral and ethical values public bodies are charged to exemplify.

I urge you to reconsider your actions and take whatever means necessary to open the debate and deal formally with these proposals.

From: andrew@asklein.com
To: [Publiccomment_codedevelopment \(DHCD\)](#)
Cc: [Flanders, Kyle \(DHCD\)](#)
Subject: USBC & SFPC Public Comments for VA Board of Housing & Community Development
Date: Monday, May 8, 2023 2:55:40 PM

Dear Board Members,

The Air-Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Institute (AHRI) asks for your support of five code proposals: **BF202, BF608 (Parts 1&2), BF911 and BF5003**. These proposals update the MAQs of flammable gas to align the USBC and SFPC with the 2024 ICC model codes.

As I mentioned in my testimony today, as the industry moves from refrigerants with an A1 classification to an A2L classification, the inventory inside of HVAC distributors' warehouses will need to transition. Without these amendments, the existing S-1 warehouses would need to become H-2 occupancies. This is not practical due to area limitations and the prohibitive cost of construction.

These five code change proposals are part of those necessary for the industry transition, and the ICC supports the accelerated local adoption:

[Microsoft Word - 2021_IFC_A2L_Required_Changes_FINAL_03.01.23_Backup.docx \(iccsafe.org\)](#)

Thank you,

Andrew Klein, P.E.

Representing AHRI

Fire Protection Engineer | Chemical Engineer

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FIRE DEPARTMENT
Fire Chief's Office

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December 9, 2022

Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development
600 East Main Street, Suite 300
Richmond, VA 23219

Board of Housing and Community Development Members,

At the past Board of Housing and Community Development meeting on October 3, 2022, Board of Housing members met to consider code proposals for the 2021 Virginia Code adoption process. The process that was utilized to update the fire and building codes through the Department of Housing and Community Development Board did not take Virginia's fire service voices and interests into account. There were many members of committees and subcommittees who spend countless days and hours participating in the code development process. By not allowing discussion, testimony, and consideration on non-consensus code proposals, the public process to consider fire prevention and risk reduction is compromised and not effective. Many of these code proposals were extremely important to the fire service and the citizens of the Commonwealth, such as:


1. Requiring sprinklers in townhouses
2. Strengthening code requirements for energy storage systems and electric vehicle charging stations
3. Removal of fire extinguishers in certain occupancy classes
4. Egress safety hardware for use in public buildings

Members of the Board of Housing and Community Development voted to bypass discussion and not allow the fire service to advocate for many commonsense safety measures and life safety proposals. In a process where it only takes one person in a sub-workgroup for a code proposal to be considered non-consensus, this is hardly a collaborative process. Board members have an obligation to represent all the citizens in the Commonwealth of Virginia in advancing life safety. Please reconsider the process and include the code proposals from the fire service.

Respectfully,



David Povlitz, Chief
Arlington County Fire Department



Matthew Cobb, Chief Fire Marshal
Arlington County Fire Department

cc: Mark Schwartz, Arlington County Manager
Aaron Miller, Arlington Deputy County Manager