

## Mashington State Legislature

## **Olympia**

October 1, 2009

Peter DeVries, Council Chair Washington State Building Code Council PO Box 42525 Olympia, WA 98504-2525

RE: Proposed rules amending the Washington State Energy Code

Dear Chairman DeVries.

We would like to commend the work of the Washington State Building Code Council and the Energy Technical Advisory Group. We sincerely appreciate the time, energy and expertise the Energy TAG devoted to developing the changes and the Council's decision to put them forward as a package for rulemaking.

We support efforts to promote more energy efficient buildings – efforts that will set us on the right path to meet our state's growing demand for energy, to cut greenhouse gas emissions and to help homeowners, renters, and businesses control their energy costs. We are proud that Washington State has long recognized the value of strong energy codes as essential to a comprehensive energy policy. Once a new building is constructed, it's expensive, if not impossible, to achieve the energy efficiency that is so economical at the time of construction - an opportunity we can't afford to lose. And as energy costs rise, more energy efficient buildings mean more manageable energy bills for homes and businesses.

The energy code is prominent in SB 5854, a bill we introduced and which became law earlier this year, precisely because energy codes represent one of the best long-term means to increase energy efficiency on a large scale. The law directs the State Building Code Council to develop and adopt codes that will result in increasingly energy efficient homes and buildings so that, by 2031, new construction will be 70% more energy efficient than that required by the 2006 state energy code.

We would like to take this opportunity to clarify an important point regarding SB 5854. The law includes the following language: "... the council shall adopt state energy codes from 2013 through 2031 that incrementally move towards achieving the seventy percent reduction ..." The language was deliberate: the Legislature did not want to interfere with the 2009-2010 energy code revision cycle which was already underway when SB 5854 was being debated. As the prime sponsors of SB 5854 and its House companion, we

were aware that this revision was underway and that legislation should not disrupt this ongoing work. But it was never our intent to "freeze" the energy code standards until the 2013 revision, and we are pleased that the Council has been responsive to Gov. Gregoire's call for increased energy efficiency. We and our legislative colleagues recognized that cost effective energy efficiency efforts in the short term will lead to more economic opportunities and more cost-savings for consumers in the long term.

Thank you for your consideration. Please don't hesitate to call on either of us if we can answer any questions.

Senator Derek Kilmer

Sincerely,

Representative Christine Rolfes

Christine Rolfes

23<sup>rd</sup> LD 26<sup>th</sup> LD