



April 6, 2020

Diane Glenn, Chair  
Washington State Building Code Council  
Post Office Box 41449  
Olympia, Washington 98504-1449

Re: COVID-19 and 2018 Washington State Energy Code-Residential (WSEC-R)

Dear Chair Glenn and Council Members,

The Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish Counties' 2,700 members are professional homebuilders, architects, remodelers, trades people, planners and engineers, suppliers, manufacturers, and sales and marketing professionals in Washington state. Most of our member companies are small businesses that are facing severe economic hardship and uncertainty in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Beyond the immediate health and safety concerns, we are very concerned about the many ways in which this crisis has and will continue to disrupt our economy. The 2018 Washington State Energy Code-Residential (WSEC-R) is now set to go into effect November 2020, but we are still not ready for the far-reaching changes the code will bring. We are writing to ask you for a longer delay in the implementation of the new energy code from November 1, 2020 to July 1, 2021.

The ongoing pandemic was not anticipated at the time of the energy code's adoption last year, and we are very concerned that there will be significant issues associated with its implementation. Local government staff working through this unprecedented crisis will be further strained with the requirement to implement the significant residential energy code changes by November 2020. Building departments are closed, or severely access limited, and this is already causing delays in the permitting pipeline.

Energy code classes, which are vital to get the homebuilding industry up to speed on these substantial changes, are being postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Rescheduling these much-needed classes is unresolved and difficult as this health crisis progresses, and priorities have shifted to addressing and curbing the virus' spread in our communities.

State-of-the-art appliances, windows, and other devices necessary to ensure energy code compliance were not going to be readily available to homebuilders this year before the pandemic. Now, emerging disruptions in the homebuilding supply chain will exacerbate this issue even more as the virus will interrupt both production and global distribution of these new devices.

COVID-19 is reshaping work plans in government and businesses for the entirety of 2020 and beyond. We understand and appreciate the important goals the new energy code is designed to meet, but firmly believe a longer delay in its implementation is a necessary and responsible action to take at this time.

MBAKS appreciates the opportunity to comment on the impacts of COVID-19 on energy code implementation. Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,



Brian Holtzclaw  
2020 Board President



Kat Sims  
Executive Director