



Date: May 11, 2010

To: Governor Strickland,

From: The Undersigned Organizations

Re: Ohio's Energy Codes for Residential Construction

CC: Ohio General Assembly

As Governor, we know you are proud of the steps ***Ohio has taken to become a national leader in clean energy policy.***

- Ohio's electric utilities are implementing programs to meet some of the strongest energy efficiency and renewable energy requirements in the country.
- Ohio also has one of the nation's most celebrated low-income weatherization programs, providing services to over 1,200 families per month.
- The Council of State Governments named Ohio number one for green job creation, and two energy experts are now seated at the Ohio Board of Building Standards.

When considering all of these energy successes, ***it seems inconceivable that Ohio has some of the weakest residential building codes in the region.***

- Michigan, Indiana, Pennsylvania, and Illinois have either adopted the 2009 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) in full or are working swiftly towards adoption.
- Yet, Ohio actually became the first state in the nation to make its residential code less efficient in 2008 – the same year it passed historic legislation to require efficiency and renewable standards for electric utilities.

***Ohio's weatherization program actually has stronger efficiency standards than those set for new home construction.***

- Common sense and cost-effective technologies such as programmable thermostats, adequate insulation, and energy efficient light bulbs should be a requirement for all homes – not just the homes of low-income families that are weatherized. Investing in efficiency during construction costs less and saves more energy.
- In fact, Ohio spends on average \$5,000 per home in its weatherization program, and stronger building codes would cost far less at the time of construction.

***The most recent International Energy Conservation Code 2009 (IECC), contrary to the statements of some home builder lobbyists, will not drive up home costs.***

- According to an independent analysis from ICF International, many buildings constructed to meet the 2009 IECC would actually cost *less* to build than under Ohio's current residential building energy code, while reducing energy consumption (and lowering Ohio's peak electricity demand) as well.
- Providing a savings of at least \$220 annually on each customer's utility bills, the 2009 IECC would have a rapid or immediate payback, freeing up funds for homebuyers to spend, save, and invest in Ohio's economy.

***Stronger residential efficiency standards will support our state's many manufacturers of insulation and other efficiency technologies, protecting and creating jobs for countless Ohioans.***

- Raising the bar on minimum building requirements will create more opportunities for construction workers and contractors by ensuring they know how to build energy efficiency into homes both new and old. Currently, the state needs to create Ohio-specific code compliance training or materials, but Ohio's adoption of the 2009 IECC would allow the state to qualify for free or low-cost training resources through either the Department of Energy or the International Code Council.
- Ohio's polymer and chemical industries are energy-technology innovators, bringing forward a continuous stream of materials that contribute to more energy-efficient structures.

Ohio should adopt the 2009 IECC and set in place policies to require the adoption of the IECC immediately after a new version is published every three years. Adoption and implementation of the 2009 IECC benefits Ohio consumers through energy savings, Ohio jobs through increased demand for energy efficiency products, the environment through reduced energy consumption, and the entire state through stronger energy policy. Moreover, every three years, the IECC code is strengthened to include greater consumer protections, and the IECC development process is open and consensus-driven, involving the nation's top homebuilders, engineers, architects, consumer advocates, product specialists, and environmental organizations. Ohio should take advantage of the opportunity to give homeowners the benefits of the most energy efficient technologies and practices available.

Our consortium of environmental organizations, building code experts, consumer advocates, and business representatives asks you to move forward stronger building codes. If you have questions, please contact Jack Pounds of the Ohio Chemistry Technology Council at (614) 224.1730 or Jennifer Miller of the Sierra Club Ohio Chapter at (614) 461.0734 ext 304. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Affordable Green Housing Center, a program of Environmental Health Watch  
American Chemistry Council  
Audubon Ohio  
Building Cleveland by Design/ParkWorks  
Building Codes Assistance Project  
Center for Energy and Environment, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission  
Citizen Power  
Cleveland Housing Network, Inc.  
Columbus NAACP  
Community Action Council of Portage County  
Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization  
Enterprise Community Partners  
Environment Ohio  
Environmental Law and Policy Center  
Go Sustainable Energy  
Greater Ohio  
GreenCityBlueLake  
Humanity's Loom, LLC  
International Code Council  
Melink Corporation  
Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance

National Wildlife Federation Great Lakes Office  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Neighborhood Progress Inc.  
Ohio Apollo Alliance  
Ohio Association of Community Action Agencies  
Ohio Chemistry Technology Council  
Ohio Conference on Fair Trade  
Ohio Consumers' Counsel  
Ohio Environmental Council  
Ohio Interfaith Power and Light  
Ohio Laborers District Council  
Ohio League of Conservation Voters  
Ohio League of Women Voters  
Ohio Partners for Affordable Energy  
Ohio Poverty Law Center  
Policy Matters Ohio  
Polyisocyanurate Insulation Manufacturers Association  
Progress Ohio  
Responsible Energy Codes Alliance  
Sierra Club Ohio Chapter  
Sustainable Rhythm  
Third Sun Solar  
U.S. Green Building Council Central Ohio Chapter  
U.S. Green Building Council Cincinnati Regional Chapter  
U.S. Green Building Council Northeast Ohio Chapter  
U.S. Green Building Council Northwest Ohio Chapter  
Vote Solar

