

To the committee:

I am an architect in Minnesota for the last 25 years, and the owner of my own architecture firm in Minneapolis, Yarrow Architecture. I am also a volunteer for the group Passive House Minnesota.

I understand that building code is baseline. It is the worse building you can build legally. Unfortunately, many residential builders take code as the guide to what should be built, and no more. To me, as an architect committed to the ethics of protecting my clients, I cannot ethically build a building to only energy code minimum these days. Our current residential energy code is stuck in 2012. We need to keep up with the latest IECC code adoption cycles, every 3 years, as many other states do, get on board with IECC 2024 as soon as possible, and continue to advance energy code per the 2024 legislation. For ethical reasons, for protection of Minnesota home buyers, for responsible use of energy resources in the future, for the comfort and health of Minnesotans, it is imperative that we raise the floor on our building codes.

For your information and consideration:

- This bill would repeal our 70% energy savings by 2038 requirement for the residential energy code—at a time when energy costs are hitting families harder than ever, electricity demand is rising, and we have yet to start reducing emissions from the residential building sector.
- Meanwhile, opponents of strong energy codes have repeatedly used inflated numbers to portray the added costs of code compliance, ignoring the projects where high performance homes can be on par or even cheaper to build than code minimum
- We Paused Building Codes and Homes got still More Expensive. Since 2015, the price of a home in Minnesota has increased by 75%. Yet, the residential energy code did not change over that time. If energy codes were a primary driver of housing costs, this period should have seen much slower price growth
- Efficiency is important to lowering monthly bills and making homes affordable to own or rent
- Efficient Homes are Healthy Homes
- Actually, higher efficiency doesn't always mean higher cost. There are many of ways to build a wall, roof, or other building assembly. Some of those ways are both more energy efficient AND more cost effective!
- Smaller equipment: Better insulation and air sealing means a substantially smaller furnace or heat pump can maintain the same or better comfort, reducing the size and cost of HVAC equipment needed.
- Less framing labor and material: By building using Advanced Framing Techniques, such as spacing studs 24 inches apart instead of 16, less labor and less lumber is used, while providing larger cavities to fill with more insulation.

As a residential architect who specializes in energy efficient new homes and retrofits, I know there are many ways to build an energy efficient building affordably. Using the latest IECC code will not break the bank. In fact, it is lazy and uncreative to think that it will. Code is not prescriptive and there are many ways to build well, affordably, and meet the latest energy code.

Thank you,

Marcy Conrad Nutt AIA\* . CPHD . LEED AP

Owner of Yarrow Architecture LLC

