

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6402

**AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS,
FEBRUARY 6, 1992**

Brief Description: Revising procedures for approval of amendments to the state building code.

SPONSORS: Senators Newhouse, Bauer, Amondson, McCaslin, McMullen and von Reichbauer

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators McCaslin, Chairman; Roach, Vice Chairman; and Matson.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Sutherland.

Staff: Eugene Green (786-7405)

Hearing Dates: February 6, 1992

BACKGROUND:

The State Building Code Council consists of 15 members and two ex-officio members appointed by the Governor to three-year terms. The Department of Community Development provides administrative and clerical assistance to the council. The Building Code Council updates the State Building Code, adopts amendments to the State Building Code, and approves or denies all county and city amendments to the State Building Code if such amendments apply to single-family or multifamily residential buildings (as defined).

Problems have arisen from the county or city practice of adopting "stand-alone" ordinances. These ordinances have the effect of changing the State Building Code without actually amending the Code, thereby bypassing the approval of the State Building Code Council if such ordinances apply to single-family or multifamily residential buildings. Questions have also arisen as to the present definition of multifamily residential building.

SUMMARY:

"Multifamily residential building" is redefined from residential buildings that consist of four or fewer units that do not exceed two stories in height, that are less than 5,000 square feet in area and that have a one-hour fire resistive occupancy separation between units to residential buildings that are less than three stories in height and contain less than 15 dwelling units.

"Stand-alone ordinance" is defined as an ordinance, resolution, or regulation adopted by a local government which effectively amends the State Building Code as it applies to single-family or multifamily residences.

Any proposed stand-alone ordinance of a city or county shall be submitted to the State Building Code Council for approval. If the ordinance is not approved by the council, the stand-alone ordinance shall not be effective.

The State Building Code Council shall immediately begin procedures to adopt by rule clear criteria to review local amendments to the State Building Code that add construction requirements to single-family or multifamily residential buildings beyond those contained in the State Building Code.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

Stand-alone ordinances are often confusing, increase the cost of building an affordable home, and are burdensome to the builder. Building Code uniformity is essential.

TESTIMONY AGAINST:

Local governments need flexibility to meet local situations. Let us not make the State Building Code Council into a battleground. Appointees should not have prior restraint over local elected officials.

TESTIFIED: Mark Triplett, Building Industry Association of Washington (pro); Gary Lowe, Washington State Association of Counties (con)