
**Community Development, Housing &
Tribal Affairs Committee**

HB 2168

Brief Description: Concerning minimum room area and floor area square footage requirements for single-family residential areas.

Sponsors: Representatives Blake, Fitzgibbon and Sawyer.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Exempts minimum room area requirements from the State Building Code.
- Prohibits cities and counties from regulating or restricting minimum room or floor area requirements for single-family residential buildings, unless necessary for fire, life safety or environmental purposes.

Hearing Date: 1/21/14

Staff: Sean Flynn (786-7124).

Background:

The State Building Code.

The State Building Code (SBC) provides a set of statewide standards and requirements related to building construction. The SBC is comprised of various international model codes, including building, residential, fire, and plumbing codes, (model codes) adopted by reference by the Legislature. The model codes are promulgated by the International Code Council.

The State Building Code Council (SBCC) consists of local government officials as well as building industry and public representatives. The SBCC is responsible for adopting, amending, and maintaining the SBC. The SBCC must regularly review updated versions of the model codes and adopt a process for reviewing proposed statewide and local amendments. The model

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codes are updated and published every three years. The next updated model codes will be published in 2015.

The International Residential Code (IRC), is one of the model codes adopted by the Legislature. The IRC creates minimum standards for one or two family dwellings. The current version of the IRC contains certain minimum floor space requirements, including:

- every dwelling must include at least one habitable room no less than 120 square feet;
- other rooms must have a floor area at least 70 square feet (except for kitchens); and
- any habitable room must be at least 7 feet wide (except for kitchens).

Cities and counties may amend the SBC as applied within their jurisdiction, except that amendments may not be below minimum performance standards and no amendment affecting single or multi-family residential buildings may be effective until approved by the SBCC.

Local Development Regulations.

Cities and counties engaging in comprehensive planning may enact ordinances regulating the use of land and zoning certain development and activities. Such regulations generally may include the location of buildings for residence, industry, trade and other purposes; the height, construction and design of buildings and structures; the size of yards, open spaces, lots and tracts; the density of population; the set-back of buildings; and the subdivision and development of land.

Summary of Bill:

The minimum room area requirements promulgated in the International Residential Code are not adopted as part of the SBC. Local governments may not amend the Code to require a minimum room area or floor area square footage, unless necessary for fire, life safety or environmental purposes.

Cities and counties may not regulate or restrict the minimum room area or floor area square footage for single-family residential buildings through a comprehensive plan, unless necessary for fire, life safety or environmental purposes.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on 4/1/14.