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

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**HB 1123**

**Brief Description:** Regulating the minimum dimensions of habitable spaces in single-family residential areas.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Blake and Buys.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Exempts minimum room area requirements from the State Building Code.
- Prohibits cities under 125,000 people and counties from regulating minimum room or floor area requirements for single-family residential buildings, unless necessary for fire, life safety, or environmental purposes.

**Hearing Date:** 1/26/15

**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 3 years. The latest updated model codes were 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 last adopted 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 include the location, construction and size 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:**

Any provisions of the International Residential Code that establish the minimum dimensions of habitable spaces in single-family residential buildings are not adopted into the SBC. Local governments, except cities with a population of 125,000 or more, may not adopt amendments to the SBC that regulate the minimum dimensions of habitable spaces in single-family residential buildings, unless necessary for fire, life safety, or environmental purposes.

Any city with a population under 125,000 may not adopt ordinances that regulate or restrict the minimum dimensions of habitable spaces in single-family residential buildings, unless necessary for fire, life safety, or environmental purposes.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.