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SUBMITTED VIA ONLINE FORM

Public Safety and Security Committee
Connecticut General Assembly
Legislative Office Building, Room 3600
Hartford, CT 06106

To the members of the Public Safety and Security Committee:

On behalf of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), I am providing the written testimony below in support of [H.B. 5401](#), the 12th item on the [agenda for the Committee's public hearing](#) on Thursday, March 5, 2026 at 11:00am.

NAHB is proud to recognize the Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Connecticut (HBRA of CT) and its members as one of more than 700 affiliated state and local associations across the country. NAHB represents more than 140,000 members in all fifty states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico who design, construct, and supply single-family homes, build and manage multifamily projects, and remodel existing homes. In the single-family market, NAHB's members construct custom housing as well as homes for first-time home buyers, including low- and moderate-income families and individuals. NAHB's multifamily members build and manage rental housing for renters in market-rate, affordable, and federally assisted multifamily housing. Our members are proud to construct over 80 percent of the homes produced each year that provide shelter for this nation's families.

NAHB welcomes the opportunity to discuss the information on building code adoption around the country and the recent trends for a more measured pace of change. We look forward to our continued support of the HBRA of CT in their efforts to help the General Assembly find solutions to provide more Connecticut households the American Dream of affordable home ownership.

Sincerely,

Karl J Eckhart

Karl Eckhart
Vice President, State and Local Government Affairs
National Association of Home Builders

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NAHB Testimony Before the Public Safety and Security Committee on Connecticut H.B. 5401

While model code development organizations like the International Code Council (ICC) publish new editions of their model building codes such as the I-Codes every three years, most states do not require review and/or adoption of new codes every three years. Many choose code adoption timelines significantly longer than three years – and nine home rule states do not even have mandatory statewide residential codes. In addition, many states amend model codes to moderate impacts on construction practices and disruption to the real estate market.

Recent trends in state and local policymaking show a number of jurisdictions – even those with extended histories of frequent and consistent building code updates – reconsidering the notion of the “traditional” three-year code cycle. Others attempted to adopt or did adopt significantly more stringent new codes, then later reversed course. Whether these changes are formally enacted into law or establish new *de facto* regulatory practices and expectations, these communities are hearing from stakeholders from across the design and construction industry urging them to rethink long-standing policies to respond to the ongoing housing affordability crisis.

Three states have acted in recent years to **pause future building code updates** for extended periods of time:

- **California:** Gov. Gavin Newsom [signed AB 130](#) in July 2025, prohibiting the state from adopting any changes to residential building codes (except to address emergencies like wildfire mitigation) through June 2031 and prevent local jurisdictions from amending their residential codes during this period. The law also allows production buildings and developers a 10-year period to use a model home approved under the requirements of the current code in effect when building homes with the same blueprints – giving a full decade to complete a development without having to navigate a code change between phases.
- **North Carolina:** In August 2023, the state legislature enacted [HB 488](#), creating separate code councils to adopt and amend the requirements for residential and nonresidential buildings. The bill established a six-year review cycle for the new Residential Code Council, with its first full revision to become effective in January 2031. The bill did authorize interim revisions to the energy, fuel gas, and mechanical portions of the code to proceed in 2025, though these were also later delayed by subsequent March 2025 legislation ([HB 47](#)) to become effective not before July 2026.
- **Hawaii:** In response to the [August 2023 Maui wildfires](#), Gov. Josh Green issued the first of a series of [Governor’s Proclamations Relating to Affordable Housing](#), which included the suspension of authority of the State Building Code Council (SBCC) to adopt or amend the [Hawaii State Building Codes](#) (currently based on the 2018 I-Codes). Typically, under state law, if the SBCC does not adopt a model code within two years of its official publication date, that model code shall automatically become part of the state code until the SBCC adopts a superseding amended version. In 2025, Gov. Green issued an [additional proclamation](#) suspending the requirement for the state’s four counties to adopt the latest state building code update within two years. The state [currently intends](#) to completely skip the 2021 I-Codes and begin review of

the 2024 I-Codes by hiring two technical advisors to assist the SBCC to draft necessary amendments. This will streamline and simplify the adoption process for Hawaii's counties after the SBCC suspension is lifted.

Three other jurisdictions took action to **reconsider residential code updates** that did or would have significantly increased the stringency of energy efficiency requirements:

- **Vermont:** In September 2025, Gov. Phil Scott issued an [executive order](#) from that governor reinstated the state's 2020 residential energy code edition and called for a review of the 2024 edition which had been in effect for over a year. The order also retroactively permitted projects commenced under the 2024 code to instead use the 2020 code.
- **Delaware:** In November 2025, the executive branch declined to approve its own proposed energy code update (which likely would have been the most stringent statewide code in the nation) set to take effect in December 2025. The state has begun the review process again.
- **Kansas City (Missouri):** After adopting the 2021 IECC unamended in October 2023, the significant cost impacts dramatically decreased construction activity. The city [did not issue one single-family permit](#) for the first three months under the new code, and the number of residential builders active in the city dropped by 78% in 2024. This February, the city council approved amendments to the code to address the least-cost effective requirements and to provide builders more cost-effective options.

Other states have **altered the process** for how the state will consider future code updates:

- **Indiana:** This year, the state legislature enacted [HEA 1003](#), which overhauls the responsibility of many state agencies, including the Fire Prevention and Building Safety Commission. The law will effectively freeze the state's residential code last updated in 2019 and require legislative approval for future proposed code updates.
- **Rhode Island:** Though previously required to update its building codes following each three-year ICC model code development cycle, the state experience several pandemic-related delays while considering the 2021 I-Codes editions. In 2023, the state legislature enacted a law authorizing the executive branch to skip the 2021 codes and adopt the 2024 editions but with a roughly 18-month transition period that allowed for the [development of a training program](#) led by the state HBA in partnership with NAHB.

Still more states employ **de facto code adoption cycles longer than three years**, even if not required to do so by law:

- Example states that adopted 2021 editions of the ICC model codes that never adopted the 2018 editions:
 - Louisiana, Michigan (implementation has been delayed due to pending litigation), Wisconsin (commercial only)
- Example states that are considering the 2024 editions of the ICC model codes that never adopted the 2021 editions:
 - Georgia, Hawaii

- States with current residential codes (as of January 2026) based on the 2018 I-Codes (or earlier editions):
 - Alabama, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, West Virginia
- Home rule states without mandatory statewide residential codes:
 - Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, Mississippi, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming