



**AIA**  
Washington Council

Washington State Building Code Council  
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**The American Institute of  
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Chairman Orth & SBCC Members:

AIA Washington Council supports all of the proposed changes to the 2018 Washington State Residential Energy Code as forwarded by the Energy Code TAG, and we urge you to approve their adoption.

As practitioners who work to design better buildings every day, architects believe strongly that energy code updates are the best and often only way to make substantial and widespread improvements to the environmental impacts of residential construction.

Washington needs aggressive codes to help get us to our climate targets because we are simply unlikely to get there on our own. And, as you know, fast progress is required, both by the Legislature's mandate that energy codes should become increasingly more efficient as part of every revision cycle so that new buildings are effectively zero carbon-ready by in 2031, and by Executive Order 14-04, which directs the SBCC to achieve early and widespread deployment of energy-neutral buildings prior to the 2031 statutory requirement.

We believe market forces will not change the industry fast enough for the basic reason that the market does not know what it does not know. This is especially true in the residential sector, where the market moves very slowly and resists change. If policymakers do not promote big changes in the industry, homeowners will never know that they can ask for or expect better than what the market is currently producing. The building science, technology, modeling tools and resources we need to hit our state's climate targets are available now, but they need to be adopted on a much larger scale. State mandates are the best opportunity to get us there.

There are also significant cost savings to residential owners in the long run from implementing aggressive code updates. Stronger codes help owners realize annual utility savings that heavily outweigh the up-front costs of the efficiency measures that would be required. This is particularly important for residents of affordable housing and 55 and better communities with fixed incomes who struggle to make ends meet. Like most citizens across the state, these residents are not able to impact efficiency-related design and

construction decisions made by the developers of these residential projects – but the state can do it for them.

Ultimately, the full market must shift to achieve meaningful emissions reductions. To make this happen, Washington needs aggressive codes to reach the state's goals on climate and deliver energy efficiencies to homeowners and renters. We urge you make this happen by approving these important changes to the 2018 Residential Energy Code.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Corey Zachow', written in a cursive style.

Corey Zachow  
President, AIA Washington Council