
Local Government Committee

HB 2667

Brief Description: Increasing housing access and affordability by decreasing construction costs associated with implementing the Washington state energy code for residential buildings.

Sponsors: Representatives Chapman, Maycumber, Tharinger, Hoff, Vick, Blake, Dufault, Van Werven, Barkis, Eslick, Springer, Kretz and Schmick.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Removes design goals for the Washington State Energy Code pertaining to increasing energy efficiency and other items.
- Allows the State Building Code Council to amend the State Energy Code for residential structures to decrease construction costs, rather than to increase energy efficiency.
- Delays implementation of the 2018 edition of the State Energy Code for residential structures, and directs the State Building Code Council to review and amend the code to reduce constructions costs and to provide the least burdensome alternatives to compliance.

Hearing Date: 1/29/20

Staff: Kellen Wright (786-7134).

Background:

The State Building Code Council (Council) is responsible for adopting the State Energy Code (SEC). The SEC provides the maximum and minimum energy code requirements for residential buildings, and the minimum code for nonresidential buildings. The SEC applicable to residential structures must be reviewed every three years, and may be amended to increase the energy efficiency of newly constructed residential buildings. The most recent edition of the SEC is the 2018 edition, which is anticipated to go into effect on July 1, 2020.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The SEC has three design goals: 1) To result in the construction of increasingly energy efficient buildings to help achieve the goal of constructing homes and buildings with zero-fossil-fuel greenhouse gas emissions by 2031; 2) To require new buildings to meet energy efficiency standards while allowing flexibility in design, construction and heating; and 3) To allow space heating equipment efficiency to offset or substitute for building envelop thermal performance. The Council is required to update the SEC with incrementally increased energy efficiency standards for residential and nonresidential buildings. These increased standards must culminate in a 70 percent net energy usage reduction in the 2031 edition of the SEC as compared to the 2006 edition.

Cities, towns, and counties are required to enforce the provisions of the SEC.

Summary of Bill:

The design goals of the State Energy Code (SEC) are eliminated.

The State Building Code Council (Council) may amend the SEC to decrease the construction costs of new residential buildings. The Council must delay implementation of the 2018 edition of the SEC for residential structures, and must review and amend this edition by January 1, 2021, to reduce constructions costs and to provide for the least burdensome alternatives for compliance.

The Council may not increase, but may decrease, energy efficiency requirements for residential buildings in the 2018 edition of the SEC for residential structures. Only nonresidential structures must achieve a 70 percent net energy usage reduction in the 2031 edition of the SEC as compared to the 2006 edition.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 20, 2020.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.