
SENATE BILL 5185

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Senator Benton

Read first time 01/15/15. Referred to Committee on Government Operations & State Security.

1 AN ACT Relating to a six-year time frame for substantial building
2 code amendments; amending RCW 19.27.074, 19.27A.045, and 19.27A.025;
3 and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that current adopted
6 building codes provide adequate minimum performance standards for
7 construction in accordance with accepted standards of engineering,
8 fire, life safety, and energy efficiency. Every update to the code
9 imposes costs on consumers, builders, and local governments. Numerous
10 changes to multiple sections of multiple building codes every three
11 years create an unfunded mandate on local authorities that must
12 implement and enforce the building codes. The building codes created
13 by the international code council, inc. and the international
14 association of plumbing and mechanical officials that are adopted by
15 reference by Washington are copyrighted materials that must be
16 purchased by businesses and code enforcement officials. The cost to
17 purchase the 2012 additions of all the codes adopted by reference is
18 over four hundred dollars for one set. Whenever there is an update to
19 the code, builders, permitting officials, and code enforcement
20 officers must all purchase new codes and be retrained on the changes.
21 The legislature intends to reduce the burden on local governments,

1 businesses, and consumers by extending time requirements so that
2 substantial revisions to the building codes occur less frequently.

3 **Sec. 2.** RCW 19.27.074 and 1989 c 266 s 3 are each amended to
4 read as follows:

5 (1) The state building code council shall:

6 (a) Adopt and maintain the codes to which reference is made in
7 RCW 19.27.031 in a status which is consistent with the state's
8 interest as set forth in RCW 19.27.020. In maintaining these codes,
9 the council shall ~~((regularly))~~ review updated versions of the codes
10 referred to in RCW 19.27.031 and other pertinent information ~~((and
11 shall amend the codes as deemed appropriate by the council))~~.
12 Substantial amendments to the codes may be adopted no more frequently
13 than every six years;

14 (b) Approve or deny all county or city amendments to any code
15 referred to in RCW 19.27.031 to the degree the amendments apply to
16 single-family or multifamily residential buildings;

17 (c) As required by the legislature, develop and adopt any codes
18 relating to buildings; and

19 (d) Propose a budget for the operation of the state building code
20 council to be submitted to the office of financial management
21 pursuant to RCW 43.88.090.

22 (2) The state building code council may:

23 (a) Amend the codes as deemed appropriate by the council;

24 (b) Appoint technical advisory committees which may include
25 members of the council;

26 ~~((b))~~ (c) Employ permanent and temporary staff and contract for
27 services; and

28 ~~((c))~~ (d) Conduct research into matters relating to any code or
29 codes referred to in RCW 19.27.031 or any related matter.

30 All meetings of the state building code council shall be open to
31 the public under the open public meetings act, chapter 42.30 RCW. All
32 actions of the state building code council which adopt or amend any
33 code of statewide applicability shall be pursuant to the
34 administrative procedure act, chapter 34.05 RCW.

35 All council decisions relating to the codes enumerated in RCW
36 19.27.031 shall require approval by at least a majority of the
37 members of the council.

38 All decisions to adopt or amend codes of statewide application
39 shall be made prior to December 1 of any year and shall not take

1 effect before the end of the regular legislative session in the next
2 year.

3 **Sec. 3.** RCW 19.27A.045 and 1990 c 2 s 5 are each amended to read
4 as follows:

5 The state building code council shall maintain the state energy
6 code for residential structures in a status which is consistent with
7 the state's interest as set forth in section 1, chapter 2, Laws of
8 1990. In maintaining the Washington state energy code for residential
9 structures, beginning in 1996 the council shall review the Washington
10 state energy code every (~~three~~) six years. After January 1, 1996,
11 by rule adopted pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW, the council may amend
12 any provisions of the Washington state energy code to increase the
13 energy efficiency of newly constructed residential buildings.
14 Decisions to amend the Washington state energy code for residential
15 structures shall be made prior to December 1 of any year and shall
16 not take effect before the end of the regular legislative session in
17 the next year.

18 **Sec. 4.** RCW 19.27A.025 and 1991 c 122 s 3 are each amended to
19 read as follows:

20 (1) The minimum state energy code for new nonresidential
21 buildings shall be the Washington state energy code(~~(, 1986 edition,~~
22 ~~as amended~~)). The state building code council may, by rule adopted
23 pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW, amend that code's requirements for new
24 nonresidential buildings provided that:

25 (a) Such amendments increase the energy efficiency of typical
26 newly constructed nonresidential buildings; and

27 (b) Any new measures, standards, or requirements adopted must be
28 technically feasible, commercially available, and cost-effective to
29 building owners and tenants.

30 (2) In considering amendments to the state energy code for
31 nonresidential buildings, the state building code council shall
32 establish and consult with a technical advisory committee including
33 representatives of appropriate state agencies, local governments,
34 general contractors, building owners and managers, design
35 professionals, utilities, and other interested and affected parties.

36 (3) Decisions to amend the Washington state energy code for new
37 nonresidential buildings shall be made prior to December 15th of any
38 year and shall not take effect before the end of the regular

1 legislative session in the next year. Any disputed provisions within
2 an amendment presented to the legislature shall be approved by the
3 legislature before going into effect. A disputed provision is one
4 which was adopted by the state building code council with less than a
5 two-thirds majority vote. Substantial amendments to the code shall be
6 adopted no more frequently than every (~~three~~) six years.

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