

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5491

C 372 L 23
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description:

Allowing for residential buildings of a certain height to be served by a single exit under certain conditions.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs (originally sponsored by Senators Salomon, Shewmake, Frame, Liias and Stanford).

Senate Committee on Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs
House Committee on Housing

Background: 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) 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.

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 multifamily residential buildings may be effective until approved by the SBCC. Current SBC rules specify there must be a minimum of one stairway for access and exit for buildings and structures three stories or 36 feet. If the building structure is more than three stories or 36 feet, the structure must have two or more stairways.

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;

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- 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: The SBCC must convene a technical advisory group for recommending modifications and limitations to the International Building Code (IBC) that would allow for a single exit stairway to serve multifamily residential structures up to six stories above grade plane. The recommendations must include:

- considerations for adequate and available water supply;
- the presence and response time of a professional fire department; and
- any other provisions necessary to ensure public health, safety, and general welfare.

The technical advisory group must provide its recommendations to the SBCC in time for the council to adopt or amend rules or codes for implementation in the 2024 IBC. The SBCC must adopt additions and amendments to rules or codes as necessary by July 1, 2026.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	46	2	
House	96	1	(House amended)
Senate	48	1	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 23, 2023