

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2228

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Housing, February 18, 2026

Title: An act relating to scissor stair regulations in the state building code.

Brief Description: Concerning scissor stair regulations in the state building code.

Sponsors: House Committee on Local Government (originally sponsored by Representatives Zahn, Duerr, Ramel, Peterson, Parshley, Lekanoff, Reed, Thomas, Gregerson, Ormsby, Hill and Bernbaum).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/10/26, 95-0.

Committee Activity: Housing: 2/18/26 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the State Building Code Council to convene a technical advisory group for the purpose of recommending amendments to the State Building Code that would allow scissor stairs in certain residencies.
- Directs the advisory group to provide its recommendations in time for the Council to adopt or amend rules and codes as necessary for implementation in the 2027 code update.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Bateman, Chair; Alvarado, Vice Chair; Goehner, Ranking Member; Gildon, Orwall, Salomon and Trudeau.

Staff: Benjamin Omdal (786-7442)

Background: State Building Code, Council. The State Building Code (SBC) provides a

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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.

The model codes are updated every three years. The SBCC must adopt amendments to the SBC on a three-year cycle that follows the model code adoption cycle. Substantive amendments to the SBC may only be made once during the update cycle.

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.

The SBCC can convene technical advisory groups (TAGs) to review petitions for amendments. TAGs may include one councilmember, but otherwise must consist of subject matter experts designated by the SBCC.

A person can qualify as a subject matter expert through education, training, or experience that leads to the person being recognized as an expert on a subject, topic, or system. A person who wishes to be appointed to a TAG may submit an application to the SBCC during an application period. The SBCC must approve or deny an application within 30 days of the close of the application period.

In order for a petition referred to a TAG to be taken up for consideration by the SBCC, it must receive the approval of a majority of the TAG.

A fire resistance rating is the amount of time that a building component can withstand a fire before losing structural integrity during a standardized fire resistance test.

Summary of Bill: Scissor stairs are interlocking stairways with separate exits that are separately enclosed and divided by fire-resistance rated assemblies.

The SBCC must convene a TAG for the purpose of recommending amendments to the SBC that would allow scissor stairs in occupancies of more than two dwelling units in which the occupants are primarily permanent. The TAG must consider public health, safety, welfare, and construction cost when making recommendations.

The recommendations must be made to the SBCC in time for the SBCC to adopt or amend rules and codes as necessary for implementation in the 2027 code update to the SBC.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: No public hearing was held.

Persons Testifying: N/A

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: N/A