

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5156

As of January 23, 2025

Title: An act relating to elevator standards in smaller apartment buildings.

Brief Description: Concerning elevator standards in smaller apartment buildings.

Sponsors: Senators Salomon, Bateman, Liias, Nobles, Riccelli, Shewmake and Stanford.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Housing: 1/17/25.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the State Building Code Council to adopt by March 31, 2026, standards for cities and counties to allow all passenger and freight elevators to meet the global or North American safety and related standards.
- Requires the State Building Code Council to adopt by March 31, 2026, standards for cities and counties to allow passenger elevators no larger than those that accommodate a wheelchair for apartment buildings with at most six stories and at most 24 units.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Staff: Benjamin Omdal (786-7442)

Background: State Building Code Council. 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.

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

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.

The International Building Code establishes minimum requirements for all buildings except detached one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses up to three stories. The International Residential Code comprises all building, plumbing, mechanical, fuel gas, and electrical requirements for one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses up to three stories

State Elevator Standards. Under current code standards in Washington, in buildings with an elevator, at least one elevator shall provide fire department emergency access to all floors served in:

- buildings four or more stories above or below grade plane; and
- specified occupancy building types regardless of stories.

Elevator cars must accommodate a 24-inch by 84-inch ambulance stretcher. Specified occupancy building types include occupancies containing sleeping units where the occupants are primarily transient in nature—transient congregate living facilities with more than ten occupants, hotels, or motels; permanent occupancies with more than two dwelling units—apartments, dormitories, or vacation timeshare properties; and institutional occupancies—care facilities, or correctional facilities.

Summary of Bill: By March 31, 2026, the SBCC shall adopt, by rule, standards for cities and counties to allow all passenger and freight elevators to meet the most current version of global safety and related standards, or, in the alternative, the current North American standards.

The SBCC must also adopt standards for cities and counties to allow passenger elevators no larger than those that accommodate a wheelchair for apartment buildings with at most six stories and at most 24 units total.

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.