



March 5, 2018

Jack E. Applegate, CBO, CPI, CHI

President, Executive Board, International Code Council Region II

Re: Kootenai County Building Codes, Building Code Ordinance Amendment Proposal

To whom it may concern;

Hello, I am writing as a building code official who has worked in the construction industry since 1988 and has worked as a building official, inspector and plans examiner in the State of Idaho for Northwest Code Professionals. I am also the current Executive Board President of the International Code Council (ICC), Region II, serving the great States of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming.

I am opposed to any ordinance or laws that attempt to make any exceptions or exemptions to having proper building plan reviews, permits, and inspections to ensure the public protects their most valuable assets, the people, and to ensure they have sound and safe buildings. It is very rare for one person to own a structure or one family even to own a structure forever and the only way to ensure predictably safe buildings is through a well vetted permitting process for both current and future owners.

The International Code Council is a member-focused association with over 64,000 members. It is dedicated to developing model codes and standards used in the design, building and compliance process to construct safe, sustainable, affordable and resilient structures. Most U.S. communities and many global markets choose the International Codes to ensure their citizens are protected with the reasonable, safe, energy efficient and sustainable homes and businesses. Currently, fifty states and the District of Columbia have adopted the I-Codes at the state or jurisdictional level. Federal agencies including the Architect of the Capitol, General Services Administration, National Park Service, Department of State, U.S. Forest Service and the Veterans Administration also enforce the I-Codes. ICC develops construction and public safety codes through the governmental consensus process. This system of code development has provided the citizens of the U.S. the highest level of safety in the world for more than 80 years. The ICC governmental consensus process meets the principles defined by the National Standards Strategy of 2000.

The International Codes when properly adopted provide minimum safeguards for people at home, at school and in the workplace. The current codes are comprehensive, coordinated building safety and fire prevention codes and employ the most modern methods of energy conservation.



In not adopting the most current model codes or by not requiring building permits the entire County region is in jeopardy of having increased property insurance rates, dangerous buildings, loss of property values and putting at risk the largest investment a family may ever make.

The Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS®) performed by the Idaho Surveying and Rating Bureau, INC. is an independent rating organization operating with a license from the Idaho Department of Insurance as a "rating making organization" for property insurance. The Bureau is operated as a not-for-profit association of insurers and used by a major percentage of the insurance industry assesses the building codes in effect in a community and how the community enforces its building codes, with special emphasis on mitigation of losses from natural hazards. The BCEGS program assigns each municipality a BCEGS grade of 1 (exemplary commitment to building-code enforcement) to 10. Advisory loss cost credits will apply to ranges of BCEGS classifications (1-3, 4-7, 8-9, 10). Idaho Surveying and Rating Bureau, Inc. gives insurers BCEGS classifications, BCEGS advisory credits, and related underwriting information. Should Kootenai County choose to exempt permits or not adopt the current model codes they would automatically receive the lowest rating possible with a score of 10. Only 2.8% of the country scores this low. This could have a very negative effect on insurance rates for the community.

The primary incentive for communities to commit resources to ensure proper current model codes and code enforcement should be to reduce loss of life, the risk of property loss, and economic and social disruption that result from fires, structural failures or natural catastrophes. Communities with good enforcement can expect **commensurate reductions in property insurance rates** throughout their respective communities.

I strongly urge the County to always adopt the most current model building codes and to prevent permit exemptions that will endanger lives and potentially increase insurance rates throughout the County. Uniform model codes and permit processes make it easier for contractors and trades people to bid fairly and meet minimum code standards to protect the consumer.

Thank you for taking the time to consider testimony.

Sincerely,

Jack E Applegate, CBO, CHI, CPI | *President*

International Code Council Region II, Executive Board President

ICC Building Codes Action Committee, *Vice Chair*

ICC Military Families Task Group