



For Immediate Release

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International Code Council CEO Calls for Using Strong Codes in Haiti Recovery

Use of building safety codes results in fewer injuries and lives lost

Richard P. Weiland, Chief Executive Officer of the International Code Council, has issued the following statement regarding the Haiti earthquake and the necessity of using stronger codes in the rebuilding effort. The International Code Council is a non-profit, membership organization composed of code officials ranging from building inspectors to fire suppression officials, along with architects, engineers, developers and building owners, and others involved in the building safety community. The Code Council develops model codes which have been adopted in all 50 states, and are either adapted or used as resources around the world including nations in the Caribbean, Central and South America, Asia and the Middle East. The family of International Codes includes specific sections addressing natural hazards, which are regularly updated in coordination with U.S. federal agencies and reflecting current data and field experience. Mr. Weiland's statement is below.

“On behalf of our members and our organization, we extend support and prayers to the people of Haiti, and for the efforts underway to respond to the devastating impacts of the earthquake. In particular we are thinking of our colleagues in the building safety community, as they develop strategies to rebuild from this incredible devastation. As Haiti moves in the coming days and weeks from the challenges of immediate response to those of short-term and long-term recovery, we encourage the smart application of proven seismic safety principles to rebuild Port-au-Prince and other Haitian communities. We know that damage, fatalities and injuries from earthquakes can be reduced by code adoption and enforcement. Effective codes, such as the International Codes enforced throughout earthquake-prone areas in the U.S., require certain design and construction approaches that acknowledge hazards and the risks they pose. The many members of the Code Council who work in seismically active regions know firsthand the value of these codes and the techniques to ensure their

effective enforcement. While building to newer codes may result in slight increases in construction costs, studies show that every dollar spent on building safer and stronger prevents four to seven dollars in future losses.

“We stand ready to support the efforts of the U.S. State Department and other federal agencies, along with the United Nations and other international relief organizations, to make sure that Haiti is rebuilt in a manner that creates disaster resilience. The seismic provisions of the International Codes are regularly updated to reflect the latest knowledge about earthquake dynamics and building behavior, and can function as an important tool in the Haitian recovery effort. We can provide written materials, subject-matter expertise, and professional development to ensure a safer and more sustainable Haiti.

“The events in Haiti once again teach us that any effort involving rebuilding should require construction that utilizes the best available information on codes and code enforcement. Events of similar magnitude result in different impacts based on how a nation and community approach their management of the built environment. Our codes are intended to protect people inside buildings by preventing collapse and allowing for safe evacuation. Structures built to the most modern codes should resist minor earthquakes without suffering damage and ride out severe earthquakes without collapsing.”