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The International Code Council Applauds Bipartisan Legislative Effort to Preserve U.S. National Safety Standards

Pro Codes Act would protect copyright of codes and standards that governments seek to utilize for public benefit

Washington, D.C. – On March 16, 2023, Senator Chris Coons (D-DE) and Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) introduced the *Protecting and Enhancing Public Access to Codes Act*, or *Pro Codes Act* ([S.835](#)), in the U.S. Senate with Senators Thoms Tillis (R-NC) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) joining as original cosponsors.

Sen. Coons and Tillis serve as the chair and ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee's subcommittee concerning intellectual property. Sens. Cornyn and Whitehouse also serve on the Judiciary Committee, signaling the importance of this issue across party lines and increasing the likelihood for Congressional advancement of the bill.

Through the *Pro Codes Act*, the U.S. Congress recognizes the vital role consensus-based codes and standards play in public safety. The act underscores the importance of ensuring that standards developing organizations (SDOs) like the International Code Council, who make their codes viewable for free online, retain the copyright for their respective codes that governments seek to utilize by incorporating them by reference into law.

The *Pro Codes Act* will protect the codes and standards widely used by the federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial governments to ensure building safety policies. If passed, this legislation will help to preserve the cost-effective, public-private partnership through which the private sector develops up-to-date safety codes that are vetted and utilized by public officials for the American people.

These copyright protections have been challenged in recent years by for-profit companies selling unpermitted and erroneous copies of codes and standards carefully developed by various SDOs.

“Standards development organizations work tirelessly to enhance community resilience and sustainability as well as to protect the health and safety of communities around the world through the development of life safety codes and standards,” said Gabe Maser, Code Council Senior Vice President of Government Relations. “Our standards development system costs taxpayers nothing and has worked efficiently for over 125 years. The advancement of the *Pro Codes Act* is essential towards protecting this transparent and balanced system, the value of which is well recognized in the U.S. and abroad.”

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About the International Code Council

The [International Code Council](#) is the leading global source of model codes and standards and building safety solutions. Code Council codes, standards and solutions are used to ensure safe, affordable and sustainable communities and buildings worldwide.