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Code Organization Testifies before Congress

The nation's leader in building code development, the International Code Council, today told Congress that it is committed to helping communities construct energy efficient buildings that are safe, sustainable and green.

Testifying before the House Committee on Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, Code Council CEO Rick Weiland said the Council supports increasing energy efficiency in the built environment. Weiland told the Committee that compliance with energy efficiency codes could be better achieved with financial support for code officials, America's First Preventers. The House of Representatives approved and sent to the Senate the Community Building Code Administration Grant Act, legislation that would provide funding to local building departments to support code adoption and compliance.

"Without strong compliance, even the most positive code provisions have limited value," he said. "This is one area where a federal role is absolutely appropriate and critical to our overall effectiveness."

Weiland also cited the Code Council's development of the National Green Building Standard (NGBS) as another way the organization is supporting energy efficiency. Developed in partnership with the National Association of Home Builders, the NGBS provides guidelines for builders and homeowners to construct safe and affordable residences that are also energy-efficient and environmentally friendly.

"We are always ready to work with the Federal agencies," Weiland said. "We are now coordinating our SMARTcode efforts to automate code checking, including the energy code, through Building Information Modeling. This new technology will help agencies to better and more efficiently meet their own energy and environmental mandates from the Congress and the President."

The Code Council develops the *International Energy Conservation Code* (IECC), a code establishing minimum regulations for energy efficient building. At its upcoming Final Action Hearings for the 2009 International Codes, the Code Council will consider approximately 100 proposed changes to the IECC. Code changes to be debated and voted on include proposals that would require more

efficient appliances, light bulbs, windows, insulation and a number of other materials that impact a building's energy use. The Code Council's Final Action Hearings take place Sept. 17-23 in Minneapolis.

Several witnesses at the hearing endorsed the Code Council's code development process as the proper forum for continued development to reach energy efficiency goals. They also endorsed the Council's call for better enforcement of code compliance. Endorsements came from the Department of Energy, National Association of Home Builders, Energy Efficient Codes Coalition and Environment America.

The International Code Council, a membership association dedicated to building safety and fire prevention, develops the codes used to construct residential and commercial buildings, including homes and schools. Most U.S. cities, counties and states choose the International Codes, building safety codes developed by the International Code Council.

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EDITORS NOTE: Photos are available at iccsafe.org/RPW717.