



30th Alaska State Legislature

House Labor and Commerce Committee

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Sponsor Statement

House Bill 359

An Act relating to a state residential code, the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, and municipal building codes.

House Bill 359 would establish a residential building code for the state of Alaska. Currently, a patchwork of construction, electrical, and plumbing codes apply to certain municipalities. No formal mechanism exists for coordination between the various entities to ensure that the codes are not duplicative, leave gaps, or conflict. Therefore, government agencies spend time and money developing their own codes and businesses spend time and money navigating the resulting assortment of regulations. A report from the Governor's Housing Summit illustrated that there is a consensus to consolidate the existing patchwork of regulations.

A consistent code would promote best practices in residential construction and consumer protection. HB 359 would benefit the state, the builder, and the consumer. A statewide code would reduce insurance costs across the state and would save state resources of going through separate code reviews, amendments, and adoption processes. Builders who work in multiple jurisdictions would benefit from consistency in requirements of a statewide code, as they currently have to comply with a patchwork of codes, code editions, and local amendments. Having one statewide code would provide home buyers with the security of knowing any home built in the state meets a widely-accepted minimum standard for construction.

A statewide code would improve the quality of housing for consumers and the current gaps and inefficiencies in the system without being onerous and expensive. HB 359 would provide increased simplicity and safety and would further economic development and job creation. Consistent regulations across the state would remove confusion and streamline the processes of complying with regulations for businesses and municipalities.

Please join me in supporting House Bill 359 to protect consumers and improve the quality of our construction.