

Senate Local Government & Housing

02/29/2024 Upon Adjournment

SB24-092 Cost Effective Energy Codes

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Cory Gaines For themselves	<p>An open email to the sponsors of SB24-092 (Cost Effective Energy Codes) and the Senate Local Government and Housing Committee.</p> <p>My name is Cory Gaines. I hope to be able to testify remotely in support of this bill, but I wanted to write you (along with putting this in the written record on the bill) in case my teaching schedule does not allow it. If anyone who gets this email would like, please feel free to read any or all of it into the record.</p> <p>I am in support of this bill because I think it makes good on the promise we citizens of Colorado hear often from our policymakers: that of helping to keep houses affordable.</p> <p>When I put nice rhetoric like this next to the fact that past choices, such as bills requiring the adoption of restrictive statewide energy codes, made by a group of unelected political appointees and with little to no local input or flexibility, I can't help but question just how sincere the desire to keep houses affordable is.</p> <p>The counter to statements like mine is, of course, that future savings on energy will more than make up for the increased upfront costs brought about by stricter codes. If one sits down and actually takes the time to read through the estimates that undergird such claims, however, one finds that they depend on a series of claims which may or may not reflect reality and may or may not be the actual future that we see.</p> <p>All of this is on top of the fact that the assumptions behind such statewide codes and claims of cost savings do not take into account the wide variety of ways that people actually live in homes and the</p>

	<p>variation inherent in our state. They simply cannot; reality is hugely complicated.</p> <p>A more realistic, tailored, and local approach is what is needed to energy codes. An approach that better respects local control, local desires is needed.</p> <p>This bill helps provide that. This bill would help meet the supposed "laser focus" on affordability by helping ensure that our desire to be energy efficient doesn't start pricing us out of the ability to actually own a home.</p> <p>Your yes vote on this bill would show Coloradans that your words match your actions.</p>
<p>Sean Murphy Against Town of Berthoud, CO</p>	<p>Mister or Madam Chair, members of the committee,</p> <p>My name is Sean Murphy and I am a Trustee serving as a representative of the Town of Berthoud, CO. I am also a licensed architect in the State of Colorado. I write with the support of the Berthoud Board of Trustees to oppose SB24-092 Cost Effective Energy Code.</p> <p>The sponsors of this bill obviously lack the understanding of what delivers cost-effective construction and seek to pause any responsiveness of local municipalities to their constituents as well as a desire to freeze local innovation in construction. Why they seek the passage of this bill is beyond me.</p> <p>This governmental overreach burdens small towns like ours with dubious standards of what is cost-effective construction. We consistently work with developers, the construction industry, and residents to balance cost, long-term efficiency, good construction techniques, and quality of life for our residents in the built environment. This bill offers no assistance to our residents, does not factor in consistently rising energy prices, and limits our responsiveness to local economic conditions. This bill would put the brakes on all of our efforts to set high standards of construction that our citizens expect.</p>

	<p>As a professional in the industry and a representative of the 12,000 residents of Berthoud, our town and residents will see no benefit from this burdensome regulation and we expect the sponsors to withdraw this absurd bill.</p> <p>Thank you for your service and consideration,</p>
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February 29, 2024

Senate Local Government & Housing Committee
Colorado General Assembly
200 East Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Oppose SB24-092 Cost Effective Energy Codes (Sen. B. Pelton and Sen. Pugliese)

To: Chair Exum, Vice Chair Gonzales and Members of the Committee

Western Resource Advocates (WRA) works to protect the West's land, air, and water. For more than 30 years WRA has worked alongside non-profit allies in partnership with Colorado state legislators, regulators, agencies, and the Governor's office to help craft smart policy solutions to address climate change. I am writing to you today on WRA's behalf to express our strong opposition to SB 24-092, which would undermine the work of this general assembly the Polis Administration and stakeholders that resulted in nation-leading progress in building decarbonization efforts in recent years. We appreciate Senator Pelton and Senator Pugliese's desire to ensure affordability in housing, but this bill ignores the long-term financial savings that energy codes provide to households, instead focusing on the small upfront cost to the builder.

In doing so, the bill makes it more expensive for families to live in those homes, not less. The upfront cost of complying with codes is typically minor when compared with the price of a home; the cost of complying with the 2021 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC), for example, is [estimated](#) to range between \$2,500 and \$4,300 depending on whether additional efficiency packages are adopted. Most families will pay back this small incremental cost through a 30-year mortgage. Meanwhile, homes built to the most recent code use much less energy. The 2021 IECC can save families between 6% and 12% on energy bills each month compared to the 2018 code.

The bill also places duplicative and onerous requirements on cities and localities seeking to update their energy codes. Colorado's localities adopt model energy codes developed by the International Code Council through a national stakeholder process. Congress *already* requires these codes to be assessed for cost-effectiveness. The legislature should not require localities to waste resources performing an analysis that has already been performed.

While we support policies that will make homes affordable to more families and thank the sponsors for their efforts, this bill would do the opposite of its intended purpose. By increasing new homebuyers' energy bills, this bill would make it more difficult for families to stay in their new homes. We urge the committee to vote "no" vote on SB 24-092.

Sincerely,
Meera Fickling
Building Decarbonization Manager
Western Resource Advocates
meera.fickling@westernresources.org
