



December 18, 2012

Lawrence City Commission  
Mayor Bob Schumm  
6 E 6<sup>th</sup> Street, P.O. Box 708  
Lawrence, KS 66046

Dear Commissioners,

The Lawrence Home Builders Association supports the adoption of the 2012 International Codes. The Building Code Board of Appeals has suggested phased approaches to the most onerous new codes: higher insulation standards and new air tightness requirements. This proposed phased approach will allow more time for builders and their subcontractors to adjust their strategies to comply in the most cost-effective way.

The new codes will promote greater energy efficiency and comfort. Building our homes tighter in concert with ventilation and more insulation will result in heating and cooling savings for the homeowner. But, while greater energy efficiency can serve as a selling point to potential buyers, it should also be recognized that it comes with upfront costs. Increasing the cost of new homes is a concern, particularly for those seeking affordable housing. Another concern is that comparables used by appraisers won't take into account the efficiency aspects as a factor in determining value. Therefore, existing homes built with lesser energy requirements under previous codes will appear to be a better buy unless home buyers are educated on the long-term benefits of owning a more energy efficient home.

Lawrence currently has the highest building code standards in the region. And, while the LHBA supports having strong building codes ensuring health, safety and welfare, we also have the expectation that the new energy requirements have a clear demonstration of fiscal benefit back to home buyers to justify the cost increase. We will work to educate and train our members on best practices to meet the new code requirements and to minimize the impact to affordable housing.

Sincerely,

Bobbie Flory  
Executive Director

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