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January 8, 2021

Mr. Dominic Sims  
Chief Executive Officer  
International Code Council  
500 New Jersey Avenue NW, 6th Floor Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Sims,

As Chairman of the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus Environment Committee and Energy Subcommittee, and Mayor of the City of Geneva, Illinois, I am writing to express strong concern about the ICC's proposal to eliminate the Governmental Consensus Process that has been successfully used to develop the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) for residential and commercial buildings.

The Metropolitan Mayors Caucus is a council of 275 municipalities in the Chicago region. Our consensus sustainability pledge, the Greenest Region Compact, has a goal to "*Enact clean energy policies.*" This Compact is formally endorsed by 133 of our municipal and county members, representing 6.2 million residents. We take our responsibility to enforce energy conservation codes seriously. Robust codes protect the well-being of our residents and the environment.

We also value our role as governmental voting members in the code development process. We educated ourselves about the code proposals, and we engaged our fellow municipal leaders to exercise their responsibility to vote in the ICC's Governmental Consensus Voting Process. Our members are proud to have been a part of the success in the development of the 2021 IECC, which is the most efficient code to date.

To express the importance of municipal involvement in the IECC process, I personally attended the code development hearings in Las Vegas in October of 2019. I voiced my support for stricter energy efficiency measures, for the officials that administer the codes, and for a path forward in which we work together to respond to our constituents' needs and create a brighter, more sustainable future for them.

City of Chicago · DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference · Lake County Municipal League · McHenry County Council of Governments  
Metro West Council of Governments · Northwest Municipal Conference · South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association  
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After going to great lengths to get involved in the code development process, I am especially disappointed that the ICC is considering a proposal that would silence the voices of local government officials. I urge the ICC not to change the process from the current democratic one, which allows ICC Governmental Members to vote, to a standards process that would leave decisions up to a committee. Furthermore, it is unclear whether any governmental representatives would serve on the committee. Because this proposed change was quietly announced close to the holidays and we did not have all of the information on participating until last week, I am disheartened because it seems like the open, democratic process has already been eroded.

Many of our members—local elected officials—administer and enforce the 15 I-Codes that the ICC publishes to improve the safety, fire protection, resilience and efficiency of America’s residential, multifamily and commercial buildings. Our local government code and public safety officials are knowledgeable on how the codes such as the IECC are administered, so it is crucial to involve them in all steps of the decision-making process. Code officials vote on updates with the public interest of their constituents in mind, rather than self-serving financial interests.

If the proposed process change moves forward, government officials will have little control over the substance of the energy code, to the detriment of the cities and states that rely on the IECC as a crucial policy tool. Beginning with the 2009 IECC, the ICC Governmental Members have supported measures that steadily boosted energy efficiency. Buildings are responsible for more than two-thirds of carbon emissions in the Chicago region and government officials understand that we need robust energy conservation codes to achieve a zero-carbon economy by 2050. Curbing emissions through green buildings is crucial for the Chicago region to meet the goals in the regional climate plan that is being finalized. However, this is not just my opinion on how to reduce carbon emissions. The National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL) identified building energy codes as the most impactful policy action cities can take to meet Paris Accord greenhouse gas reduction targets. Governmental officials understand the threat that climate change poses and have used their votes in favor of efficiency, innovation, and a better future for all. The ICC Board must not silence their voices.

I urge the ICC Board to drop this attempt to disenfranchise state and local governments in the code development process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KB', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kevin Burns  
Mayor, City of Geneva, Illinois  
Chairman, MMC Environment Committee and Energy Sub Committee