

News Release from



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 2, 2024

CONTACT: Narine Manukova
517-490-8232

Builders Ask Governor to Increase Energy Efficiency Standards with Newer Code

Lansing, MI - Today the Home Builders Association of Michigan (HBAM) announced that they have asked Governor Whitmer to intervene in halting the implementation of outdated code requirements being advanced by the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA). In a formal letter to the Governor, HBAM also proposed the adoption of the new 2024 International Residential Code (2024-IRC). This model code, published by the International Code Council (ICC), would result in energy savings some 6% percent higher than what LARA is proposing, while providing home builders more flexibility.

In making today's announcement, HBAM CEO Bob Filka questioned why LARA was moving to adopt an inflexible set of codes that are already nearly 4-years old. "The outdated rules LARA is proposing will benefit insulation and electrical manufacturers more than it will homeowners and the environment. The outdated 2021 version of the ICC's model code that LARA is pushing ties the hands of builders in terms of what products and building methods they can use. Home building codes should establish strong performance requirements and allow innovation. The 2024 updated model code gets this right. Who cares if you use 2X6 framing and R-60 insulation or some other method to achieve energy savings requirements? Manufacturers do because they want their products to essentially be mandated in the code. State regulators most certainly shouldn't. They need to reverse course and get this right or new home production will decline. Housing is too important for our state's economic future to get this wrong."

HBAM's letter to the Governor also notes that there are major legal problems with LARA's proposed building code rules. "Michigan is long overdue in updating its residential building codes," noted Filka. "By law home building codes are supposed to be updated at least once every six years and it has been more than nine since our last update. That same law says they can't be updated more frequently than once every three years. Why, then, wouldn't we want to adopt the latest 2024 set of model codes? We will be stuck with an outdated 2021 version until 2027 or longer should LARA not withdraw their proposed rules. That would be an unfortunate mistake that will set our state back for years to come."

The Home Builders Association of Michigan, a professional trade association comprised of 18 local homebuilder associations around the state and their 5,000 builder, subcontractor and supplier members. As the state's largest association representing construction-related sectors, the HBA of Michigan works to positively promote the building industry and impact legislative, regulatory and legal issues affecting housing attainability.

####