



Washington Association of Building Officials
2025 Legislative Talking Points

“Codes should be written by the State Building Code Council”

- The SBCC (State Building Code Council) is comprised of subject matter experts from varying backgrounds.
- We ask that whatever policy decision the legislature wants to make (electric vehicle charging stations / wildfire mitigation / building code changes), they still task the SBCC with writing the actual building codes and fund them appropriately.

“Limiting impacts to life and safety”

- WABO understands there is a housing crisis and wants to work with lawmakers to be part of the solution.
- However, building codes have been improved over time to support life safety measures that are critically important to protecting the residents of Washington.
- Similar to our top priority, any changes that are made as a way to address the housing crisis should be viewed with a lens of health and safety, and a robust discussion should take place at the SBCC.

Specific Bills to Highlight:

- **HB 1438 and HB 1353: Self-Certification of residential permits**
 - **WABO POSITION [CONCERNS]**
 - Automatic approval of building permits is concerning to WABO members.
 - The building permit review and approval process is typically one of the shorter reviews, 4-6 weeks, versus land use and planning, which can take months, but is critical to ensuring structures are built with life and safety in mind.
 - An auto-approval could lead to corrections in the field on structures that are already constructed or in the process of being constructed. If issues are found later in the project who bears the responsibility of the increased costs to correct the issues?
 - In the past architects and engineers have favored the traditional relationship that exists between code officials and design professionals in which we work in a symbiotic relationship both benefiting from a checks and balance system that ensures a comprehensive set of working drawings.
 - This bill includes a provision for “serious public health or safety issues”. How is that defined? What constitutes a serious issue?” It could be easily argued that all corrections for accessibility, means of egress, structural, or energy code constitute a “serious issue”.
- **HB 1254: Implementing International Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Code (Duerr)**
 - **WABO POSITION [SUPPORT]**
 - The WUI code establishes minimum regulations for land use and the built environment in designated wildland areas to help mitigate wildfire hazards.
 - WABO has three priorities as this bill advances: 1) restore the ability of the SBCC to update the WUI code as needed, 2) ensure completion of maps prior to the code going into effect, 3) Maintain the ability for local adoption of maps if statewide maps are not sufficient for a jurisdiction
 - Given the pace of the legislature and ensuring information is current. This document will be updated and sent out prior to WABO’s virtual week on the hill.
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