



March 17, 2020

Governor Jay Inslee
Office of the Governor
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee,

On behalf of the over 8,000 statewide members of the Building Industry Association of Washington (BIAW) who are engaged in all aspects of home construction, and the 250 statewide jurisdictional members of the Washington Association of Building Officials (WABO) who are responsible for the development, enforcement, and administration of building construction codes, thank you for your leadership in the current state of emergency. Acting quickly to stem the spread of COVID-19 is crucial and you have taken the decisive and proactive steps necessary to protect the people of our state.

It is also important to mitigate the negative effects the necessary restrictions of social distancing and the size of meetings will have on Washington's economy. BIAW and WABO, the regulated and regulators of the construction industry, hope you will partner with us in our shared quest to provide a smooth code transition to Washington's residents.

The Washington State Building Code Council approved all new building codes to be implemented on July 1, 2020. These codes impart the 2018 International Code Council model codes with state adaptations. As is the case with every code cycle, BIAW, WABO, and other organizations offer code update classes to ensure builders, code officials, and others have the knowledge to comply with the new regulations. These classes are primarily held in March, April, May, and June so that builders and code officials can effectively comply with the new regulations on July 1. However, given the necessary and prudent restrictions enacted to prevent the spread of COVID-19, BIAW has more than two dozen classes in March and April alone that have been canceled or will likely be canceled. WABO has been forced to reschedule the Annual Educational Institute where building officials were supposed to learn about these building code changes. Both the regulated and regulator communities will be at a disadvantage for compliance without these educational opportunities.

BIAW and WABO officially request that you delay, by Executive Order, the implementation of the coming new building codes in RCW 19.27.031 and RCW 19.27A.020, set to take effect July 1, 2020, for 123 days or until November 1, 2020. A short delay would provide both builders and code enforcement officials the time necessary to make-up the education needed before the new regulations take effect.

Employers and employees will take the brunt of the impact as our state continues to combat the spread of COVID-19. A moderate and practical delay on the upcoming implementation of building codes will assist our state's homebuilders to stay in business and provide employment and housing for the residents of Washington.

Thank you for considering this request for quick action to mitigate economic damage and to ensure that future compliance is possible. Housing is vital to a healthy economy and population. Let's work together to ensure Washington's code transition is as seamless as possible for all Washingtonians.

Sincerely,



Greg Lane
Executive Vice President
Building Industry Association of Washington



C Ray Allshouse
President
Washington Association of Building Officials

CC: Chris Davis
Scott Merriman
David Postman
Drew Shirk
Richard Brown
State Building Code Council Members