

SF 2361 and HF 2527 – Putting 2012 Energy Code into Iowa law

This bill would put the 2012 Energy Code into Iowa law, in spite of the technological advances that continue to accelerate, providing safer, more resilient homes that are less expensive to live in. Setting a technology-based standard through inflexible statutes sets Iowa up to fall behind.

- The state already has an established process by which it updates its energy codes administratively. The process includes opportunities for stakeholders from across the state to provide input into the development of the new energy code. This process is working – legal changes aren't necessary.
- Energy codes are the only building codes that pay customers back through lower monthly energy bills. An assessment of the 2021 Energy Code for Iowa shows it would provide a 12.7% energy cost savings in the *first year* and every year that the home exists.ⁱ
- Because they are less expensive to own, owners of energy efficient homes are 32% less likely to default on their mortgages.ⁱⁱ
- The pace of technological advancement since 2012 means that high-efficiency windows and lighting provide significant energy saving benefits at little to no additional cost. Appropriate air sealing, like what is included in the updated codes, has a significant cost-benefit ratio for homeowners.
- Energy efficiency provides a lot of resilience benefits. More efficient homes are more comfortable, even in extreme temperatures, and can make it easier for occupants to shelter in place during extreme weather events.
- Safety is critical. Iowa law must not put residents at health and safety risk through problems with indoor air quality, mold, fire risk, etc. The energy code provides for health and safety protections and this bill creates such safety risks by making it harder to regularly adopt appropriate code updates.
- Lowering the bar for Iowa homes, or freezing those standards in time, will not create more housing – it will just make the housing that is built outdated, less resilient, less safe, and more expensive to maintain.

ⁱ *Cost-Effectiveness of the 2021 IECC for Residential Buildings in Iowa*, U.S. DOE, July 2021.

https://www.energycodes.gov/sites/default/files/2021-07/IowaResidentialCostEffectiveness_2021_0.pdf.

ⁱⁱ *Home Energy Efficiency and Mortgage Risk*, University of North Carolina Center for Community Capital and Institute for Market Transformation, https://www.imt.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/IMT_UNC_HomeEEMortgageRisksfinal.pdf, accessed 2.22.22.