



# AIA Florida

## **Florida Building Commission** ***SB7000 - Community Affairs***

**Action Sought** AIA Florida favors retaining the current process of using the IBC family of codes (I-Codes) as the base code for all of Florida but to permit any Florida-specific amendments that are added by the Building Commission to remain a part of every code cycle, unless they are specifically removed or modified.

**AIA Florida does not support SB 7000 in its current form, however AIA Florida supports the removal of the current sunset provisions in section 553.73(7)(g).**

**Summary** **SB 7000 (Community Affairs) requires the Florida Building Commission to use the Florida Building Code as the base code and requires the commission to review rather than update the Florida Building Code every three years.**

### **Explanation and Justification**

At the end of the last century the three primary Building Code Organizations were merged into the International Codes Council (ICC), which produced The International Building Code family of Codes called the I-Codes covering all aspects of construction and to be used throughout the United States.

Fifty states and the District of Columbia have adopted the I-Codes at the state or jurisdictional level. Federal agencies including the Architect of the Capitol, General Services Administration, National Park Service, Department of State, U.S. Forest Service and the Veterans Administration also enforce the I-Codes. The Department of Defense references the International Building Code® for constructing military facilities, including those that house U.S. troops around the world and at home.

These Codes (along with the NFPA National Electric Code), and their three-year cycle updates, become the base Codes for the Florida Building Codes.

As proposed, starting with the 6th Edition and every three years after, Florida would use the current version Florida Building Code as the base Code and it will be reviewed to see if it “needs” to be revised. This requires the Building Commission to review the updated version of the IBC family of codes and the National Electric Code (NEC) and add any improvements as amendments, *if*

*they choose.* Or, they are permitted to just let the previous Code version remain unimproved.

If the updates to IBC are not added, the Florida Building Code pulls away from the International Building Code family of Codes compiled after hundreds of hours of code expert development of a modern, comprehensive group of codes. This would cause consequences with federal and insurance ratings along with unknown compliance issues.

Who would publish the hybrid Code?

The major loss will be the evolutionary work of the American Building Science experts at the national level.

It will require the Florida Building Commissioners, Technical Advisory Committee members and stakeholders to review, at a Florida level, all the work currently undertaken by the International Code Conference every three years. Florida is not unique to any other state when it comes to people exiting a burning building or climbing stairs or designing walls to keep water out so a Florida-only code just takes us back 15 years in terms of codes knowledge and improvements.

## **Conclusion**

**AIA Florida supports the position of the Building Officials Association of Florida (BOAF).** AIA Florida supports regulation by a single set of comprehensive, coordinated, and contemporary codes and standards, which establish sound threshold values of health, safety, and the protection of the public welfare throughout the United States.

### **In favor of one section.**

Removing the first sentence of 553.73(7)(g), “Amendments or modifications to the foundation code pursuant to this subsection shall remain effective only until the effective date of a new edition of the Florida Building Code every third year”.

One of the major problems of the transition to the 5th Edition (2014) was that some Florida amendments, important to residential development, were mistakenly orphaned due to this clause and had to be reinstated via legislation.

This alone might be the best Florida Building Code adjustment in SB 7000.