

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5677

As Passed Senate, March 15, 1995

Title: An act relating to clarification of building code and structure requirements.

Brief Description: Clarifying building code and structure requirements.

Sponsors: Senators Roach, Haugen and Winsley; by request of Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations: 2/21/95, 2/23/95 [DP].
Passed Senate, 3/15/95, 48-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Sheldon, Vice Chair; Drew, Hale, Heavey, McCaslin and Winsley.

Staff: Rod McAulay (786-7754)

Background: The state building code consists of a series of uniform national codes adopted and updated by industry groups which are adopted in Washington by reference. The review and selection of national uniform standards is done by the Building Code Council. A local building official may request an opinion from the Building Code Council.

Changes in uniform standards, in nomenclature, in paragraph references and in federal law require periodic amendment of state statutes. Specifically: the Uniform Mechanical Code has been reformatted, changing chapter references; the Uniform Fire Code and Uniform Fire Code Standards are now published by the International Fire Code Institute; the definition of structures for the state energy code has been modified; the Americans with Disabilities Act modified certain references and standards governing handicapped access; the Building Code Council definition of value in determining whether a substantial remodel or substantial rehabilitation has occurred has changed from assessed value to actual value; and the chapter regulating safety glazing has long been duplicated and in conflict with uniform national glazing standards in the building code.

Summary of Bill: Nomenclature, paragraph references and grammatical errors are corrected in the statutes relating to building codes. References in the chapter on handicapped access are made consistent with federal law. The definition of a substantial remodel or rehabilitation for purposes of the handicapped access law is changed from 60 percent of assessed value to 60 percent of value. The chapter on safety glazing standards is repealed. Any official charged with the duty to enforce the enumerated building codes may request an opinion from the Building Code Council.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This legislation brings the law up to date with uniform national standards. It's basically a housekeeping measure.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Larry Ward, State Building Code Council (pro); Judith Dorse, DCTED (pro).

House Amendment(s): The House amendment deletes language which changes the exemption for apartment buildings from handicapped access requirements. The original bill reduced the exemption from ten or fewer units to three or fewer units to conform with the federal Fair Housing Act. The House amendment restores the exemption at ten or fewer.