

NAIOP

COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE
DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION
MASSACHUSETTS

December 14, 2010

Board of Building Regulations & Standards
One Ashburton Place
Room 1301
Boston, MA 02108

Re: NAIOP Opposition to Opt-in Residential Sprinkler Code

Dear Board Members:

NAIOP Massachusetts, the Commercial Real Estate Development Association, would like to record its opposition to the proposed local option requirement for sprinkler installation in one and two family homes.

NAIOP opposes the adoption of yet another "local option" code as part of the statewide building code. Much like the stretch code, which NAIOP also opposed, it would continue to undo the uniformity of the State Building Code. Furthermore, it will add significant costs to every new home constructed in these opt-in communities - with little proof of the benefits of installing such systems.

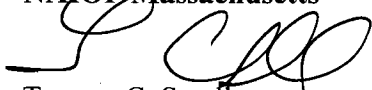
According to Chapter 143, Section 95 of the Massachusetts General Laws, the Board of Building Regulations and Standards was created to develop "Uniform standards and requirements for construction and construction materials, compatible with accepted standards of engineering and fire prevention practices, energy conservation and public safety" and to eliminate the use of "restrictive, obsolete, conflicting and unnecessary building regulations and requirements which may increase the cost of construction and maintenance."

Furthermore, Chapter 143, Section 98 states that no city or town may impose more restrictive construction standards than those established in the State Building Code without prior approval by the Board. Such a change could only be considered by the Board if the city or town can illustrate a "special condition" which would warrant such a change.

The proposed sprinkler requirement would allow communities to decide by local option whether or not to mandate sprinklers in one and two family homes. The end result would be a confusing, constantly changing patchwork of codes throughout the Commonwealth. This appears to be in direct conflict with the goal of the statewide building code – to provide uniformity, predictability and clarity. **For these reasons, we strongly urge the Board to reject the suggested amendment.**

NAIOP represents the interests of more than 1400 members involved with the development, ownership, management, and financing of more than 150 million square feet of office, research & development, industrial, mixed use, and retail space in the Commonwealth. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

Sincerely,
NAIOP Massachusetts



Tamara C. Small
Director of Policy & Public Affairs