

Finlayson, Ian (ENE)

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Sent: Thursday, 17 March 2022 6:41 PM
To: STRETCHCODE (ENE)
Subject: Stretch Code Straw Proposal Comments

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Dear Reader,

I will get right to the point: the Stretch Code outlined in the Straw Proposal is inadequate: true net zero buildings do not include the on-site combustion of fossil fuels! Period. Allowing in the code for fossil fuel use is a huge disappointment! This MUST be changed in order to meet the mandate set out in the Next Generation Roadmap Act, signed last March by Governor Baker. We must stop pussy-footing around about fossil fuels....there is NO role for them in our homes if we are to stop the advance of global warming. We have to stop making accommodations to the industry that jeopardizes our future health and well being when safe alternatives are available.

As an opt-in code, it should be the "aspirational code," the one for the towns wishing to go forward aggressively toward net zero emissions. Many of these towns have been repeatedly stymied by the Attorney General's reading of state statutes and kept from restricting fossil fuels in new/major redo construction despite the overwhelming support of town residents. Seeing these roadblocks, other interested towns have not even bothered to try. By not providing a true net zero building code, DOER is continuing to hamstring the towns ready and willing to move forward and others who may be interested.

In addition, although there are towns who may adopt a true net zero stretch code regardless, there are many towns in MA who might be more likely to opt-in if there were attractive monetary incentives. Perhaps this could be achieved by allowing only Green Communities who do adopt the new (truly) net zero stretch code to be eligible to compete for the \$10M in the first round grant application process. Towns such as Andover, a Green Community, that have not yet passed net zero by-laws or home rule petitions might be more likely to opt-in were attractive monetary incentives part of the package. And, the \$10M should be greatly increased to be truly compelling or set up an additional fund specifically for towns that opt-in.

There are other points to be made and I leave it to others to make them. I will mention only one additional concern: it is important that exemptions and waivers be narrowly defined so that big loopholes are not created which would weaken the code. Flexibility-yes; giveaways-no!

The Next Generation Roadmap Act clearly is meant to move Massachusetts forward toward net zero. We applauded it when it was passed and signed. Please don't disappoint us...make us a Specialized Stretch Code that is truly net zero, one we can be proud of, one that gives towns the tools needed to do the vital work of addressing the climate crisis.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

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