

## Finlayson, Ian (ENE)

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**From:** Sue Swanson <sueswanson2003@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, 7 August 2022 5:09 PM  
**To:** STRETCHCODE (ENE)  
**Subject:** Comments on the Building Code

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Dear Commissioner Woodcock

I am deeply concerned about the climate crisis and the impact it will have on the lives of my grandchildren and all future generations. This concern was one reason I joined Mothers Out Front eight years ago. Mothers Out Front is a grassroots environmental organization advocating for swift and equitable climate mitigation locally and throughout the state.

My husband and I have personally taken several steps to reduce our carbon footprint; the Town of Bedford has also made important strides towards reducing GHG emissions from town buildings. However, neither my town nor my family can do this alone. If Massachusetts wants to meet its 2030 emission targets, we need to maximize energy efficiency in all buildings, maximize use of on-site solar energy across the state, and eliminate fossil fuel usage in our buildings as soon as possible.

We need you, Commissioner Woodcock, and the Dept. of Energy Resources, to quickly develop a Net Zero opt-in stretch energy code that leads us beyond these personal voluntary actions and provides a template for statewide implementation at a future date.

Bedford's housing stock includes many older, smaller homes which are not energy efficient. These are undergoing renovations and also total reconstruction. This is the ideal time for such homes to be transitioned to truly energy efficient buildings, using electricity instead of gas and installing solar panels whenever feasible.

We need a building code that covers this new construction and all renovations, including small scale renovations, so that homeowners can maximize the energy efficiency of their homes and replace fossil fuel systems and appliances when it is most cost-efficient to do so. It is well known that the cost of all-electric conversions compares very favorably with fossil fuel installations when they are done at these times.

I urge you to develop a true Net Zero specialized opt-in stretch energy code now. This will give local leaders like those in Bedford the tools and flexibility they need to take the next steps in meeting both local and state GHG emission reduction goals for 2030 and beyond.

As a final point, I urge you to add a provision regarding building energy reporting and commissioning. The vast majority of the carbon emissions from buildings in Bedford come from our corporate infrastructure. Without this type of reporting, how will we know if Net Zero buildings are performing as they are intended? How can we track our progress in reducing emissions? We need the DOER to require building energy reporting and commissioning to ensure genuine progress towards emissions reductions in all buildings in a transparent manner.

As it says on your webpage, the DOER “helps create a clean, affordable, equitable and resilient energy future for the Commonwealth.” A truly Net Zero Stretch Energy Code is an important piece in building the future you and I yearn for.

I thank you for this opportunity to express these thoughts and I urge the DOER to develop a true Net Zero voluntary energy stretch code, for the sake of our Commonwealth and towns like mine.

Sincerely yours,  
Sue Swanson  
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