



ENERGY EFFICIENT BUILDING CODES

A.11290 (Cahill)

S.7702 (Maziarz)

Summary

This bill would require any renovations—substantial or otherwise—to public or private buildings in New York State to meet up-to-date efficiency standards in the Energy Code. The bill would eliminate certain cost effectiveness restrictions on future amendments of the Energy Code, and eliminate the current exemption for construction on historic properties from Energy Code standards and requirements.

Explanation

Current New York law hinders the State Fire Prevention and Building Code Council’s ability to adopt more stringent standards if such standards are not deemed “economically reasonable”. By removing this impediment, the measure would allow for the implementation of stronger energy efficient standards with longer-term payback periods.

Another flaw in current state law is the threshold (more than 50 percent of a building subsystem) set for requiring renovations to meet stricter energy efficiency requirements. This bill would tighten application of the Energy Code to cover any alteration of a building in which all or any part of a building subsystem is replaced.

According to an analysis conducted by The Center for Clean Air Policy, buildings accounted for 45 percent of New York’s annual greenhouse gas emissions in 2000. As the state attempts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, updating building codes for new buildings and any renovations of existing buildings will help greatly reduce energy use and climate change pollution. This bill would improve the energy efficiency requirements for all new buildings and renovations, resulting in direct reductions in New York’s contribution to global warming.

Environmental Advocates of New York supports this bill.

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