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**The Bottom Line: FHBA Responds to BOAF Position Statement Against Building Code Bill**

SB 7000 is one of FHBA’s primary priorities for the 2017 Legislative Session. Simply put, SB 7000 proposes to move the building code development process from the “shade” and place it in the “sunshine.”

Florida has a longstanding tradition of governing in the sunshine – meaning policy proposals are vetted and approved in a public forum. Proposed amendments to statutes or rules are proposed in a manner which allow comparison to current law and then each proposal (not matter how technical) is vetted with respect to its impact. Florida’s building code is not developed like all other rule and laws in Florida.

Current law requires the Florida Building Commission to adopt the most recent code developed by the by International Code Council (ICC) then embark on the arduously inexact task of identifying and amending provisions of the ICC that conflict with the standards of Florida. Current law also requires that all Florida specific amendments to the code be sunsetted (removed from the code) until re-enacted by the Building Commission. Once the process is completed, it is not a surprise that this new code is often misunderstood and unfamiliar to contractors. The individual changes to Florida’s code have not been vetted and reviewed for Florida impact by stakeholders such as the FHBA.

SB 7000 seeks to stabilize the code and enhance its understanding by establishing the 6th edition as Florida’s base code and then requiring the Florida Building Commission to update the code every three years. SB 7000 requires that the triennium updating process include a review of the most recent ICC.

How does it change the building code development process? The ICC is not automatically adopted in its entirety. Proposed changes will be drafted to Florida’s base code and vetted to determine the impact on Florida’s consumers.

Change is difficult for those vested in the current process. For example the Building Officials Association of Florida (BOAF) currently opposes the bill. [Click here](http://fhba.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/2017-BOAF-Posiiton-Statement-Senate-Bill-700-2017-01-24.pdf)to read their statement in opposition. Though we respect their opinion and their right to take a position on SB 7000, we do not agree with their position. [Click here](http://fhba.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/2017-FHBA-Response-to-BOAF-Position-Statement-SB-7000.pdf) to read FHBA’s response to their opposition.

SB 7000 has been approved unanimously by the Senate Committee on Community Affairs. A companion bill is being introduced in the House and has early support amongst some of its leaders.

**Bottom Line:** Florida will be better served by allowing Florida’s building code to be amended in the same manner that other rules and laws are amended in Florida.

**Gov. Rick Scott Proposes Cut to Building Permit Fees**

Gov. Rick Scott is planning to ask the Legislature to cut $2.6 million in fees charged to homebuilders when they file building permits. The fee cut is part of an $8 million package of fees Scott said he wants to cut that affect businesses, veterans and seniors. The building permit cut is the largest of the nine fee reductions Scott rolled earlier this month. The building permit cut would reduce funding for enforcing state building codes, but Scott’s office said there would still be “sufficient funds” to do enforcement activities if the Legislature agreed to the cut[…read more](http://www.bradenton.com/news/business/article129767404.html)