

BILL065(23)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 632

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Dec 6, 2023 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 0

Oppose: 1

I wish to comment: 1

Name: Julia Fink	Email: julia@aiahonolulu.org	Zip: 96813
Representing: AIA Honolulu	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Dec 5, 2023 @ 04:44 PM
Name: Stefanie Sakamoto	Email: ssakamoto@imanaka-asato.com	Zip: 96789
Representing: BIA Hawaii	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: Dec 5, 2023 @ 05:44 PM



Tuesday, December 5, 2023

Honorable Tommy Waters, Chair
Honolulu City Council

Subject: Bill 65 2023
Relating to the Adoption of the State Building Code

Dear Chair Waters & Members of the Council,

The American Institute of Architects, Honolulu Chapter (AIA Honolulu) would like to express our strong **OPPOSITION** to Bill 65 (23) due to its apparent lack of coordination with the adopted State Building Code. The integrity of our building codes is crucial in ensuring the safety, resilience, and consistency of construction projects in our community.

It is essential that local legislation aligns seamlessly with state building codes to avoid confusion, contradictions, and potential safety hazards. Discrepancies between municipal and state building codes create a very challenging environment for architects, plan reviewers, builders, and inspectors, leading to inefficiencies and compromising of the safety standards we strive to uphold. There are a number of approved State building code sections that were not integrated in their entirety.

A few examples of the inconsistencies we see within this bill are:

- The definition of *Floor Area* was consolidated to combine Code and Zoning classifications (which need to remain distinct) and the definition of *Building* which is perplexingly vague.
- The added definition of *Fence* and *Site Wall* is in contradiction with the Council's ROH 18 and other ordinances which exempt fences from permitting.
- The creation of new occupancies and use groups (B-1, R-5, etc) without carrying through instructions for those occupancies in the design tables and which cannot be used as presented.
- And many more...

The AIA would like to encourage transparency in the legislative process by requesting to see commentary on why these edits were made that are drastically different from the State Code. We urge the City Council to engage in a thorough review process that involves collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including those who design to the Code and those who are responsible for its enforcement. The AIA would be willing to take part in these discussions. A coordinated approach will not only enhance the clarity of regulations but also contribute to a more efficient and secure construction environment for Honolulu residents.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,

Todd Hassler, AIA
2023 President, American Institute of Architects, Honolulu



HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL
Honolulu Hale
10:00 AM

December 6, 2023

RE: BILL 65 - RELATING TO THE STATE BUILDING CODE

Chair Waters, Vice Chair Kiaaina, and members of the Council:

My name is Max Lindsey, Government Relations Committee Chair of the Building Industry Association of Hawaii (BIA-Hawaii). Chartered in 1955, the Building Industry Association of Hawaii is a professional trade organization affiliated with the National Association of Home Builders, representing the building industry and its associates. BIA-Hawaii takes a leadership role in unifying and promoting the interests of the industry to enhance the quality of life for the people of Hawaii. Our members build the communities we all call home.

BIA Hawaii is writing to provide comments in opposition to particular parts of Bill 65. Bill 65 is needed to allow the City and County of Honolulu to adopt and amend the International Building Code (IBC) and the International Residential Code (IRC). We have been collaborating with DPP and the Mayor's administration on this bill for over a year now and believe that with the following exceptions the amendments to the codes are acceptable. These are the following amendments we object to –

1. Most significantly is the inclusion of risk category 2 buildings in **section 1615** regarding tsunami loads. This addition is more stringent than either the National Model Code or the State Building Code. The costs associated with compliance will end affordable housing projects in the inundation zone. The justification for this portion of the code is based on a 2,500 year event which is far greater than any other requirement for natural hazards. Finally the justification for this code requirement is the shelter in place concept in the event of a tsunami. Given that citizens will have no idea what buildings carry this protection and which do not, it provides no meaningful benefit to public health and safety.
2. On page 85 of the bill there is a table 301.2.1 concerning wind speed. These wind speeds were changed from 130 mph to 140 mph. BIA supports this change, however an additional modification is required. The State Building Code contains a definition of "Wind-Borne Debris Region" that defines the wind speed trigger as 130 mph. Since Bill 65 adopts the State Building Code, there needs to be an amendment modifying this definition.
3. On page 98 of the bill, item 53 contains amendments to Chapter 44. The first modification is to section 19.3.2.1 and it includes a water to cement ratio of .50. In a meeting with multiple stakeholders all parties agreed this requirement would be limited to buildings constructed with light gauge metal framing. We request this limiting language be inserted as agreed.
4. The amendments proposed for sections 110.3 and R109 are for the most part fine. These define which inspections must be done by City Inspectors as opposed to private Special Inspectors. The only section we object to is the 110.3.5 Lath and/or gypsum board inspection. Waiting for City Inspectors on such a time sensitive phase of construction is problematic.

We appreciate your consideration on these requested modifications. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.