

March 12, 2009

Dear _____:

As you know, one of the many important decisions you will make in conjunction with the 2009 Update of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC) is the proposal to Mandate Fire Sprinkler Systems in all New One (1) and Two (2) Family Homes in Virginia. The 5,000 business members of the Home Builders Association of Virginia (HBAV) would strongly urge you to REJECT that proposal.

Enclosed please find an HBAV White Paper which clearly describes how the fire sprinkler industry, in conjunction with fire officials from all across this nation, high-jacked the International Code Council (ICC) code-making process to achieve that long-time goal of both. Please review the White Paper. It will be "Eye-Opening" to you.

Also enclosed please find a Packet of Factual Materials on this issue that has been prepared by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB). It displays the significant DECLINE in home fires in the past 30 years despite significant growth in housing stocks. The packet also documents the significant DECLINE in home fire fatalities despite tremendous population growth in America. It also highlights how new homes have become safer through other cost effective code provisions and technological innovations in the past three decades.

Finally, and maybe most importantly in making your decision on this issue, please review the cost data in the packet. The cost estimates are accurate (\$5,000 per home and more in those areas that rely on water wells) and they will have a significant impact on the affordability of housing in Virginia, and the sprinkler industry driven MANDATE will yield little benefit to homeowners.

Thank you in advance for your review of the enclosed materials. HBAV would urge you to vote "NO" on the proposed to "MANDATE" sprinklers in new homes in Virginia.

Best regards,

Michael L. Toalson
Executive Vice President