



### **Position Paper on the June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012, Coalition for Current Safety Codes**

Position paper June 5<sup>th</sup> Coalition, July 14, 2012

The June 5<sup>th</sup> Coalition, initially formed by the International Code Council and the National Fire Protection Association, presents itself as “dedicated to advancing safety by advocating for the adoption of current building, sustainability, electrical, and life-safety codes”.

The International Association of Building Officials supports any effort to educate decision makers of the necessity to develop, adopt, and enforce the most current and effective construction codes. We believe this stance best reflects the desire and needs of our members. It also provides a mechanism to ensure the most efficient and effective method of creating a safe, sustainable and efficient community for residents of communities to live, work, and play.

The coalition also understands the roadblocks all construction code enforcement agencies have faced as the result of current economic challenges and budgetary cutbacks that have diminished the ability for all to adopt codes in a timely manner.

As stated above, the International Association of Building Officials supports the ideology behind promoting the adoption of current codes. There are, however, several concerns that we want to address:

1. It would seem that NFPA and ICC should already be working individually to the best of their abilities to promote this ideology. If they aren't already doing this, there has been a failure to membership. Is there a clear advantage to this coalition?
2. Membership associations should rely on approval from their members before unilaterally moving forward with anything that may have an impact on them. It is our understanding that many board members were not fully advised of this endeavor, and none of the regular members were given an opportunity to provide input on how this would affect them, their chapters, and jurisdictions.
3. While NFPA and ICC provide a platform for the adoption of important construction codes, the mechanism used to develop the codes are substantially different. Building Code Officials have made it clear that the “governmental consensus process” is paramount. We are concerned that this coalition will assume a direction that could jeopardize this fundamental belief of all ICC members.
4. The formation of any coalition that seeks to combine their strategic influence and objectives may be perceived by many members as a move toward reducing local control of the decisions on interpretation and implementation of the codes.
5. While it is clear that the codes and standards organizations understand the impact of the poor economy on their bottom line, we would submit that failure to identify other key roadblocks to the adoption and enforcement of current codes, currently being realized by



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front line building officials, would indicate a lack of understanding of real-world conditions by the leadership of the NFPA and ICC. Obstacles such as, but not limited to, undue influence on the codes by proprietary and special interests influence the loss of creditability of the model codes by elected officials.

The International Association of Building Officials will remain steadfast in its core value of representing Building Officials and other construction regulatory agencies to preserve the integrity of the code development and enforcement process. If the coalition proves to support our values, we will naturally reconsider on whether to join, participate and support the effort. However, at this time, we will not take a position of support for this effort and will choose to monitor the work of the alliance. You may feel free to convey this message to any party that seeks to know IABO's position.