

PETER WELCH
AT-LARGE, VERMONT

2303 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4500
202-225-4115

DISTRICT:
128 LAKESIDE AVENUE
SUITE 235
BURLINGTON, VT 05401
(802) 652-2450
(888) 605-7270

CHIEF DEPUTY WHIP
HOUSE DEMOCRATIC
STEERING & POLICY COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4500

COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE

COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT
REFORM



BUILDING SAFETY MONTH

May 1, 2015

Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the occasion of the start of Building Safety Month, to recognize the importance of building safety and to recognize the leadership of the International Code Council (ICC) that develops and publishes the model building safety and energy efficiency model codes used in my home state of Vermont, and each of the other 49 states. Increasingly, these codes, developed in the United States, are being adopted in other nations where safety in construction is desired.

Over the past few years, we have had several sobering reminders about the importance of building codes. In other nations, much like the case in the U.S. before the codes were widely adopted, natural events and poor construction practices still cause catastrophic loss of life. Every year, deadly fires, tornados, windstorms, floods, earthquakes and other events remind us of the critical need for strong buildings. As Congress discusses the need for resilience and greater energy efficiency in our communities, Building Safety Month reminds us that key elements of resilience and energy efficiency are properly enforced building and energy codes.

The theme of this year's Building Safety Month is "Resilient Communities start with Building Codes." I want to congratulate the leaders of the ICC, which has sponsored Building Safety Month in May every year for over 30 years. The leaders of ICC, including President Guy Tomberlin, Branch Chief Residential/Light Commercial Inspections for Fairfax County, Virginia; Vice-President Alex Olszowy III, Building Inspection Supervisor, Lexington/Fayette Urban County Government, Kentucky; Secretary/Treasurer M. Dwayne Garriss, State Fire Marshal, State of Georgia; Past President of the Board of Directors, Stephen Jones, Construction Official, Millburn Township/Short Hills, New Jersey will join ICC's Chief Executive Officer Dominic Sims in Washington the week of May 25th to discuss the critical need to support the adoption and enforcement of current building codes, to make sure Americans are safe at home, at work, at school and at play.

I also want to congratulate the leaders of the Building Safety Association of Vermont ICC, including President Glenn Moore and the other leaders of the Vermont ICC Chapter.

I would also like to thank the thousands of men and women who work every day to make sure our buildings comply with building and fire codes. Their work, largely unseen and often unnoticed, is critical to keeping Americans safe. The model building codes, developed by ICC members from all 50 states, allow every community to share the advantage of adopting building codes that are adaptable to local conditions, but at the same time incorporate the very latest

research, materials, and building practices. This is achieved in a private-public partnership, saving local jurisdictions from bearing the large expense of code revision, updating and coordination. These model codes are produced through the cooperation of thousands of local U.S. code officials working with the building industry to produce codes that represent a consensus on what the minimum safety requirements are for various building types, all without a dime of Federal taxpayer money.

Congratulations to the hard working members and leadership of the International Code Council.