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## **Minnesota City Code Officials Urged to Ride, Bike, Carpool or Drive to Minneapolis to Vote for “The 30% Solution”**

### **America’s “Most Significant Energy & Environment Policy Vote of 2008”**

**WASHINGTON** (July 28, 2008) — Echoing a unanimous resolution passed in June by the US Conference of Mayors, the Energy Efficiency Codes Coalition (EECC) today urged local Minnesota cities to send their maximum allowable voting delegation of building code officials to this September’s International Code Council (ICC) Annual Meeting in Minneapolis to help win adoption of “The 30% Solution.”

“The 30% Solution” is a comprehensive set of proposals by the EECC that employs a variety of affordable, everyday steps – like installing efficient lighting, windows and higher levels of insulation – to boost the model energy efficiency code for new home construction by 30 percent. EECC’s broad-based support comes from some of America’s top energy-efficiency advocates from government, utilities, environmental groups, academia, energy consumers and businesses.

“We’re proud that Minnesota will be the site of one of America’s most important energy, environmental, and climate policy votes of 2008,” said Janet Streff, Manager of the Minnesota State Energy Office. “Because homes account for 20 percent of our energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, new approaches to energy-efficient home construction, such as ‘The 30% Solution,’ will play an important role in meeting our energy and environmental goals.”

“Whether we win this vote will come down to who is present at the Minneapolis Convention Center when the vote comes up,” said EECC Director Bill Fay. “Joining the ICC and authorizing the travel for a city’s delegation to vote for ‘The 30% Solution’ could be the most effective investment local governments can make to eliminate wasted energy,” Fay added.

Fay praised the leadership of Burnsville mayor Elizabeth Kautz, one of the sponsors of the historic US Conference of Mayors resolution.

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“Whether you’re one of the 850 signatories of the Mayors Climate Protection Agreement (as I am) or not, mayors increasingly realize the role they can play by urging their code officials to help us meet our common goal of boosting energy efficiency across the board” said Mayor Kautz. “The great news is that more energy-efficient new homes help homeowners get a better handle on their utility bills.”

Homebuyers are willing to pay more for an energy-efficient house in exchange for lower utility bills. In fact, a recent National Association of Home Builders survey found that a majority would pay up to \$11,000 more for a new home if it would lower their annual energy costs by \$1,000. “When energy efficiency improvements are made up front, each \$1,000 invested will add about \$6 a month to a 6%, 30-year, fixed mortgage, an amount that will be more than offset by the house’s monthly energy savings — savings the homebuyer will start to see on the first day they move in,” Fay added.

Raising the bar for home energy efficiency has caused some to ask about the impact of enforcing the stricter standard on code officials, but most provisions in “The 30% Solution” require exactly the same amount of time and effort, (i.e., verifying R-20 insulation, instead of R-13). Some provisions, like duct testing, will require more *homebuilder* effort, but the code official will merely need to check the test report the builder supplies. In addition, the EECC has pledged its support for efforts at the national, state, and local level to ensure full funding for manpower and training programs for code development, administration and enforcement.

Other groups calling for a 30 percent boost in residential energy efficiency include such diverse voices as the U.S. EPA/DOE, Business Roundtable, Sierra Club, American Institute for Architects, and the Western Governors Association, to name a few.

“ICC will vote on the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) – which ‘The 30% Solution’ amends – sometime between September 17<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>,” said Fay. “With the IECC tentatively 13<sup>th</sup> on a ICC’s list of 19 codes scheduled for final action, the weekend of September 20<sup>th</sup> would be a pretty good guess for action.

Population determines how many delegates the ICC allows. Each Minnesota city and town can send four (up to 50,000 residents), eight (50,001-150,000 residents) or twelve (over 150,000 residents) voting delegates. “The more Minnesota cities that send their full delegations to vote for ‘The 30% Solution,’ the greater the odds of winning America’s most significant energy, environmental and climate policy vote of 2008,” Fay concluded.

If you or your staff has questions about this issue, please contact Bill Fay at the EECC, 202-857-0666/[bfay@ase.org](mailto:bfay@ase.org) or visit [www.thirtypercentsolution.org](http://www.thirtypercentsolution.org).