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1	Department of Natural Resources								
2	and Environmental Control								
3	Division of Climate, Coastal and Energy								
4	Public Hearing: 7 DE Admin. Code 2101 Regulations								
5	for State Energy Conservation Code								
6									
7	Docket No. 2025-R-CCE-0008								
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10	Moderated by Theresa Smith								
11	Tuesday, July 22, 2025								
12	6:00 p.m.								
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15	Remote Proceeding								
16	89 Kings Highway								
17	Dover, DE 19901								
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22	Reported by: Carlo Florio								
23	JOB NO: 7419967								
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1 APPEARAN	C	\mathbf{E}	S
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- 2 List of Attendees:
- 3 | Theresa Smith, DNREC, Regulatory Specialist
- Anna Keating, DNREC, Division of Climate, Coastal, and
- 5 Energy
- 6 | Elizabeth Burnette, DNREC, Office of the Secretary
- 7 Charlotte Weigel, Manager of Codes and Standards,
- 8 Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships
- 9 Michael Oleck, New Castle County Division of Ryan
- 10 Homes; Vice President, Home Builders Association of
- 11 Delaware
- 12 Emily Pugliese, Policy and Program Director, Green
- 13 | Building United
- 14 Todd Titus, Director of State and Public Affairs,
- 15 | Heating, Air-conditioning & Refrigeration Distributors
- 16 International
- 17 | Kevin Brozyna, K. Hovnanian Homes
- 18 Thomas H. Marston, Public Speaker
- 19 | Lisa Rice, Public Speaker
- 20 Reid Rowlands, Public Speaker
- 21 | Kevin Smith, CEO, Habitat for Humanity of New Castle
- 22 County
- 23 | Mike O'Halloran, Mid-Atlantic Petroleum Distributors
- 24 Association, Mid-Atlantic Propane Gas Association

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MS. SMITH: Good evening. now 6 p.m. on Tuesday, July 22, 2025. My name is Theresa Smith, and Secretary Patterson has appointed me to serve as the hearing officer for tonight's

6 formal proceeding.

> For ADA compliance, tonight's formal proceeding offers closed captioning in a variation of languages. For those that would like to utilize this feature, please be advised of the following steps:

If you are using a computer, there is a "Show Captions" button located at the bottom of your screen. You will need to click that option. If you don't see the "Show Captions" button, you may have to select the three dots that say "More."

Once you find the "Show Captions" button, click the caret pointing up, which will bring up the translation options. You can select your preferred language from there. If your preferred language is not listed, you can select "More," and all the languages will be listed for you.

If joining in on a smartphone, please select the "Captions" button at the bottom of the screen indicated by "CC." If your preferred language is not listed at the bottom, you may have to select the three dots that say "More." You will then select "Meeting Settings" with the gear icon next to it.

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Once the setting page comes up, located at the very bottom, select "Translation Languages."

From there you'll be able to select your preferred language, and then select "Done" at the top right corner, and then "Done" again.

We ask that those joining in please turn your cameras off and keep them off for the remainder of the hearing.

To go on, if the captions are not automatically popping up yet, you may need to select "Captions" again and then "Show Captions". So hopefully by now everybody is connected properly.

And we will now move forward to begin the hearing tonight. First and foremost, I want to thank everyone for taking time out of your busy schedules to connect with us tonight.

We are here this evening to provide a virtual platform for the State of Delaware's Department of Natural Resources Environmental Control to conduct a virtual public hearing on Docket Number 2025-R-CC-008, the proposed revisions to 7 DE Admin.

Code 2101 Regulations for State Energy Conservation Code.

The purpose of tonight's hearing is to build a record in regard to the hearing matter by providing a formal legal platform for the public to learn about the proposed revisions and to enable the public a platform to offer their verbal comment.

This hearing is being conducted virtually. No one is together in the same room. Everyone is participating independently at their own respective locations. While we are not physically gathered tonight, Zoom does generate a list of those who are virtually present for this proceeding so the department will have a record of those who have electronically joined this event.

There is a court reporter virtually present who will prepare a verbatim transcript of this hearing pursuant to the statutory requirement for DNREC to have the same prepared. And as always, that transcript will be posted on the hearing webpage dedicated to this matter as soon as it is received.

In addition, I would encourage those who are attending the hearing to also visit the hearing webpage dedicated to this matter for

additional details concerning the proposed revisions to 7 DE Admin. Code 2101 Regulations for State Energy Conservation Code.

The hearing record presented tonight, along with other related documents, are posted on the hearing -- DNREC's hearing webpage dedicated to this matter. The hearing webpage, again, can be found online under the administrative law section of DNREC's website. That will be listed towards the end of tonight's hearing.

At the conclusion of my introductory remarks, I will be turning the hearing over to the department staff to provide the presentation for the record being generated in this matter.

Once the presentation concludes, those persons who have pre-registered in advance of the hearing will be acknowledged and provided an opportunity to offer their verbal comment on the proposed regulatory matter in alignment with DNREC's standard comment protocols that will be discussed greater -- in greater detail at that time.

Before we begin the presentation, please be advised of the following protocols that remain in place for all DNREC public hearings:

All comment received must be limited solely to the subject matter of tonight's hearing.

All comments pertinent to the subject matter of the virtual hearing will be incorporated into the record being generated in this matter.

In light of the Administrative Act

Procedure and to ensure that everyone who wishes to

offer comment for the secretary's consideration is

accommodated, the department is required to, at a

minimum, provide a comment period of 15 days after the

hearing.

There is only one authentic record of the formal proceeding tonight, and it is the official court report's verbatim transcript.

The statutory purpose of tonight's hearing is to build a record with regard to the department's proposed actions. A record consisting of the transcript of this hearing tonight, all written comment, all exhibits, and eventually the hearing officer report will be reviewed by Secretary Patterson.

The secretary will ultimately issue an order following that review process, containing his decision on this matter and the reasons therefore.

Per DNREC's standard hearing protocols, there will be no Q-and-A or chat session available and permitted during the hearing.

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It is important to note no decision has already been made by the department, nor will a decision be made tonight with regard to the proposed regulatory matter.

As previously stated, DNREC wishes to ensure that everyone is enabled to offer their comments for inclusion into the record being generated in this matter. As noticed in the legal ads and online, the public comment period will be made open through August 6, 2025.

Comments may be submitted directly to DNREC through a comment form link on the hearing webpage, via email to dnrechearingcomments@delaware.gov, or via the U.S. Postal Service at the physical address for DNREC indicated on the hearing webpage and the public notices previously issued in this matter.

Written comments to DNREC may not be submitted using social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube; links to videos; or text messaging.

Please remember that all comment received, either through USPS or via the electronic mechanisms noted just now, as long as received by the department on or before August 6th, will bear the exact same weight and will be considered equally by the secretary prior to making his final decision in this matter.

While all comments are appreciated,
each commenter must be limited solely to the subject
matter of tonight's hearing. Multiple comments saying
the same thing do not outweigh one singular comment.
Simply put, comments are not votes. A single
well-supported comment may carry more weight than a
thousand form letters.

I also want to note that only comments submitted directly to DNREC and entered by myself into the formal hearing record in this matter will be posted on the hearing webpage and be considered by the department as a part of the decision process.

The department has not partnered with any outside organizations or websites to assist the public submission of comments in this matter. So again, only submit comments to DNREC directly.

Lastly, the ultimate decision regarding

2.0

this matter is made by DNREC Secretary Patterson. The formal -- this formal proceeding tonight acts as a mechanism to enable the department to thoroughly vet the hearing matter to the public and to let the public know various ways to which comment may be submitted for Secretary Patterson's consideration if so desired.

I will now hand it over to Anna Keating with the Division of Climate Coastal and Energy to provide the department's presentation.

Anna?

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MS. KEATING: Thank you, Theresa.

So the proposed regulatory action is to adopt the 2024 International Energy Conservation Code with zero-net-energy-capable amendments for residential buildings, the 2024 IECC and ASHRAE 90.1-2022 for commercial and high-rise residential buildings, and also to adopt Appendix RE for EV charging infrastructure and Appendix CB for solar ready zones, both amended to align with corresponding statutory requirements.

The statutory requirements that guided the development of this regulation are Title 16 of Delaware Code, Section 7602, which requires the State Energy Office to conduct a triannual review of the

State Energy Code and also requires all new residential building construction to be zero-net-energy-capable as of December 31, 2025.

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Section 7605 establishes solar-ready zone requirements for new commercial buildings, and Chapter 80 establishes EV charging infrastructure requirements for new residential buildings.

Stakeholder engagement is a critical aspect of both the informal and formal regulatory development process. Engagement with the interested persons list has been continuously maintained through frequent updates and active dialogue.

Preliminary stakeholder engagement with builders, nonprofits, and municipalities indicated support for adopting the 2024 IECC, opposed to the 2021 version.

We met with the Home Builders
Association of Delaware in November; Green Building
United, New Castle County, the City of Lewes, and the
City of Newark in December; the Sierra Club in
February; and K. Hovnanian Homes in March.

The State Energy Office also held a Code collaborative meeting in February that reaffirmed stakeholder engagement for adopting the 2024 IECC.

The State Energy Office held another Code collaborative meeting in May that reviewed the proposed energy code in the draft regulation and offered stakeholders an opportunity to provide feedback.

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Feedback from this meeting informed revisions to the draft regulation, including the formal -- the removal of the requirement for an ERI value of zero after factoring in on-site power production, the removal of the amendment that required two additional measures to achieve credits in the 2024 IECC table R408.2, and the removal of appendices that are not supported by statutory requirements.

The formal regulatory development process was initiated by the start action notice undergoing division director's review, receiving the secretary signature and being distributed to the interested persons list.

A deputy attorney General from the Environmental Unit of the Department of Justice conducted a legal review of the draft regulation, and the deputy secretary then reviewed and approved the draft regulation.

Legal notice advertising the public

hearing was made available on the DNREC website, the public meeting calendar, and published in both The News Journal and the Delaware State News. Spanish and Haitian Creole translations of the legal notice were also posted on the DNREC website.

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The proposed regulation, register notice, and Regulatory Flexibility Analysis and Impact Statement were published in the Register of Regulations.

There are two corrections to the Register of Regulations publication from July 1st. The register notice incorrectly states that the proposed regulation includes the adoption of the appendices listed here.

This error was noticed while conducting a review of the publication, and the regulation proposes the adoption of only Appendix RE and Appendix CB. Also, the proposed regulation inadvertently omits measure number R408.2.1.4 for reduced air leakage from table R408.2.

This error was brought to our attention through public comment, and the final proposed regulation will include R408.2.1.4 in table R408.2 as written for climate zone four in the 2024 IECC.

I would now like to enter the following
proposed exhibits into the record: the February
Delaware Code Collaborative PowerPoint, the approved
start action notice, the May Delaware Code
Collaborative PowerPoint, two PNNL reports on the
national cost effectiveness of the residential
provisions of the 2021 and the 2024 IECC, the State
public meeting calendar legal notice, the public
hearing event page, the English public notice that was
posted on the DNREC website, the Spanish and Haitian
Creole public notices that were posted on the DNREC
website, the affidavits and legal notices published in
the News Journal and the Delaware State News, the
register notice, the Regulatory Flexibility Analysis
And Impact Statement, and the proposed regulation that
was published in the register, and the public hearing
presentation. And that concludes my presentation.
MS. SMITH: Thank you, Ms. Keating.
Have there been any changes to the initial proposed
exhibits that were available on the hearing webpage?

MS. KEATING: Yes. The proposed public hearing presentation was revised on July 18th to note corrections to the register publication.

MS. SMITH: Got it.

As currently posted on the hearing webpage and introduced into the hearing record, I hereby mark these proposed exhibits as Department's Exhibits 1 through 14.

(Department Exhibit 1 through Exhibit 14 were marked for identification.)

And as you stated, that now concludes the department's presentation, and we will turn our attention to those who pre-registered for their opportunity to offer verbal comment for tonight's hearing.

Per the protocol set forth on DNREC's public hearing webpage and in the legal notices issued in this matter, those wishing to offer verbal comment during the virtual hearing must have pre-registered with DNREC no later than noon the day of the hearing. The order of these commenting tonight was established as a result of the department's preregistration process.

All comments -- all commenters must adhere to the department's protocols with regard to offering verbal comment, including making their comments as concise as possible, respecting the

three-minute time limit, and limiting their comments to the subject matter of tonight's hearing.

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There are 12 commenters that have pre-registered to provide a verbal comment tonight.

To prepare you for the order in which you'll be called upon, I'm going to read off a list of those who have pre-registered.

First to be called upon will be
Charlotte Weigel. Second, Michael Oleck. Three -third, Emily Pugliese -- and I apologize if I
mispronounce your name. Fourth is Todd Titus. Five,
Kevin Brozyna. Six is Thomas Marston. Seven, Lisa
Rice. Eight, Reid Rowlands. Nine, Kevin Smith. Ten,
Mike O'Halloran. Eleven, Norm Horn. And twelfth will
be Simon Cho.

To assist the commenters with regard to the amount of time they have, there will be a visual timer that will appear on the screen that will count down a three-minute timer.

When a speaker is called upon, the system will ask you to unmute yourself if you have joined electronically, or if you have called in, you will need to press, I believe, star six or star nine. It should prompt you and let you know how to unmute

1 | yourself as your name is called.

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Once you have unmuted yourself, I ask that you please state your name, first and last name, for the record, and the company you are representing if there is one, and then the timer will begin.

At the end of three minutes, the speaker's audio will be automatically placed back on mute, and for no reason will the commenter be granted more than three minutes of time to speak.

If the speaker is not able to finish their comment within that time period, the department encourages them to submit their completed comment in writing no later than August 6th. The comment will be transcribed by the court reporter and thereby incorporated into the hearing record.

Please note there will be no video feed of the commenter, and it is only going to be audio.

We ask that you do keep your cameras off.

Before we get started, I'd ask that we get the three-minute timer up on the screen. Great. Okay. We'll go ahead and get started. The first, again, that will be called upon is Charlotte Weigel. May I have Charlotte Weigel, please, unmuted?

And then you may please provide your

first and last name and who you represent for the record, and then you may begin your comment.

2.0

MS. WEIGEL: Good evening. My name is Charlotte Weigel, and I'm a manager of codes and standards at Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships or NEEP.

MS. SMITH: Okay. You may begin.

MS. WEIGEL: Okay. NEEP is an

independent nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that advances energy efficiency in homes and businesses in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic region.

We commend the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control for its leadership in advancing the State Energy Conservation Construction Code to comply with Title 16, Chapter 7602, requiring all new residential building construction in the state to be

zero-net-energy-capable as of December 31, 2025.

The draft building code as published in July 2025 with strengthening provisions is an important step in improving building performance, lowering energy costs, and supporting long-term resilience.

Moreover, incorporating strengthening

amendments across all model code compliance paths and the introduction of passive house and zero-net-energy homes compliance paths offers needed flexibility to builders while encouraging innovation to deliver the maximum benefit of energy efficiency to homeowners.

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In the interest of protecting Delaware consumers from unnecessary retrofit costs and further reducing household energy burdens, we propose adoption of the following code appendices: Appendix RB, solar-ready provisions; Appendix RD, electric energy storage provisions; Appendix RJ, demand-responsive controls; and Appendix RK, electric-ready residential building provisions.

Inclusion of these appendices prepares

Delaware homes for adoption of technologies that are
necessary to mitigate growing electrical grid strain
at a minimal cost to consumers and empowers them to
save on energy bills.

On June 23, 2025, PJM reported the highest peak demand in over a decade, 6,000 megawatts higher than the forecasted 2025 summer peak. Furthermore, PJM's long-term forecast for peak demand in 2035 have increased from the 2024 forecast by 17 percent within this past year alone.

Requiring new residential construction to include minimal infrastructure to support on-site renewable energy production, energy storage, demand-responsive electric water heaters, and other efficient electric appliances will allow residents to more affordably integrate these technologies, provide resilience to homes and relief to the grid, and empower residents with better control over household energy costs.

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A study commission by the National Association of Home Builders showed the impact of these appendices on cost of construction to be minimal. The study concluded that for a 2,400 square foot two-story single-family home in Delaware, inclusion of Appendix RB, RJ, and RK would add \$975, or just 0.25 percent, to the total construction cost, based on the national average of \$162 per square foot.

Considering the minimal impacts on cost of construction from available data from home builders, adoption of these appendices in combination with the proposed amendments to enhance energy efficiency will deliver the best results for Delaware residents by providing resiliency in residential new construction, control over energy bills, and stability

1 to the regional grid.

Thank you, and I appreciate the opportunity to provide this technical expertise.

MS. SMITH: Thank you, Ms. Weigel.

Next, may I have Mr. Michael Oleck

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MR. OLECK: Hi. Michael Oleck here from the New Castle County division of Ryan Homes, and vice president for the Home Builders Association of Delaware.

MS. WEIGEL: Thank you. You may begin.

MR. OLECK: Thank you.

My full-time job is a production manager for NVR, working under the Ryan Homes brand, and I'm currently dedicated to building communities in New Castle County. I'm a lifelong Delawarean, born and raised. I started my home-building career as an intern with NVR in 2004. For 21 years now, I've dedicated myself to building homes and communities for families right here in Delaware.

I understand the need to adopt new energy codes, and I support adopting the 2024 IECC, but I have concerns with the amendments being proposed.

Recently, The News Journal ran an article citing that most families earning under 120 percent of the state's median income of \$80,000 cannot afford to buy a home. I'm sure we can all remember at a time when that was not the case. In fact, prior to the global pandemic of 2020, I always felt that it was affordable to buy a home and raise a family in the state of Delaware.

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As a construction professional, a husband of a registered nurse here in Delaware, and a father of four who has deep roots here, I worry about the direction of home affordability here in our state.

When my kids start their careers, and if they choose to stay here, pursue nursing or construction as their occupations, will they be able to afford a home here in their home state?

According to the NAHB, one-third of the cost of a new home goes into the cost of compliance with regulation. So we need to be balanced and fair when adopting new codes and regulations.

This month, my company did a study that revealed that 10 percent of homebuyers who mortgaged their homes with NVR last year would be priced out of qualification of their new home if this energy code

proposal was adopted as written. Statewide, that would be 550 new homes that would not be built or sold.

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Studies differ but show that each residential building permit creates between 2.9 and 4.1 direct jobs in the local economy. This implies that Delaware stands to lose between 1,600 to 2,255 jobs from reduced permit activity with the adoption of this proposal.

The NAHB estimates that the local impact of each permit is \$111,000 in taxes, fees, and local revenue. With 550 fewer permits, local Delaware economies would stand to lose just over \$61 million in spending. The housing affordability issue is, at its core, a supply and demand issue. We have a national and statewide shortage of housing. Until we solve that problem, prices will remain high.

I urge DNREC to continue working with stakeholders to improve its energy code and adopt the 2024 IECC unamended. It is important we balance good energy policy with economic growth and affordability.

Energy savings is great, but we can't make housing a luxury good in the process, and it is important to remember that before a family can take

advantage of energy savings, they have to be able to afford the home. Thank you.

MS. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Oleck.

May I have Emily unmuted?

MS. PUGLIESE: Hi. My name is Emily

Pugliese. I am the policy and program director at

Green Building United.

MS. SMITH: Thank you. You may begin.

MS. PUGLIESE: Good evening, everyone.

Just to give you a little background, Green Building

United is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit

12 organization whose mission is to advance an equitable

transition to a climate-friendly and healthy built

environment through education, advocacy, and strategic

15 initiatives.

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16 Our region includes the Greater

17 Philadelphia area, Lehigh Valley, and the state of

18 Delaware. Our members include architects, engineers,

19 policy makers and advocates, landscape architects,

20 | marketing and communications professionals,

21 developers, contractors, building managers, building

22 operators, government workers, and more.

I am coming -- commenting today on

24 behalf of our diverse membership. Green Building

United appreciates the opportunity to express our strong support for Delaware's adoption of the 2024 international codes as amended by the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control.

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The international codes are developed and voted on by a diverse group of professionals that include experts from government and industry professionals. The open and transparent consensus process ensures that the outcome reflect the best technology, materials, and practices that the market can bear.

They are widely used throughout the United States, helping provide consistency for the architects, engineers, and contractors that work across jurisdictions. Delaware has an opportunity to be a leader in the region, paving the way for the surrounding states to implement energy— and cost—saving code updates.

To capitalize on the opportunity for success, we encourage the State to provide robust education and training, specifically to small to medium home builders and local code enforcement officials.

While large and high-end builders and contractors often have internal resources to learn new code requirements and adjust plans, documentation, and practices, Delaware needs to prioritize providing training so that all builders and contractors in the state understand the code changes and compliance requirements.

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Code enforcement in Delaware occurs at the local jurisdiction level. Local building officials need robust education and training to understand the new requirements and learn proper enforcement and compliance checking procedures. Successful implementation will require time and resources, including comprehensive education and training to support code enforcement.

In conclusion, Delaware has an exciting opportunity to lead the region in modern energy code adoption with the adoption of the 2024 IECC, reducing the long-term energy burden for Delaware residents and improving the quality, asset value, and performance of the -- of buildings for prospective buyers.

We appreciate your consideration of our comments and welcome any additional questions. Thank you.

1 MS. SMITH: Thank you.

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Next we have Mr. Todd Titus.

MR. TITUS: Hi. I'm Todd Titus. I'm the director of state and public affairs for the Heating, Air-conditioning & Refrigeration Distributors International, also known as HARDI. I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback and offer comments on the proposed regulations for State Energy Conservation Code.

of more than 1,150 member companies, with over 490 U.S.-based wholesale distribution companies that include 11 wholesale distributor members in Delaware and 21 locations throughout the state, serving heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning contractors, technicians in the state.

DNREC's proposed updates for the code be revised to not prescriptively ban the installation of natural gas systems by increasing the cost of natural gas systems with needless requirements. The proposed requirements for new residential building construction limit consumer's choice for HVAC systems.

HARDI believes in protecting consumers'

right to purchase and install whichever style of HVAC products they prefer.

2.0

However, as currently written, Section R409 of the proposed State Energy Conservation Code imposes a heat-pump-ready requirement for HVAC systems that would remove consumer choice by pricing out natural gas installations with unreasonable standards that the consumers could not afford to comply with, forcing the consumers to purchase heat pumps even if they prefer to install natural gas.

The proposed updates would have a significant adverse economic impact on businesses and residents statewide. The DNREC-provided exhibits do not consider Section R409 requirements for participation in the DOE'S ZEHR program. The DOE itself describes the program as being rigorous requirements.

As such, HARDI disagrees with any determinations that the proposed changes would not result in increased expenses. In Section R47 -- 4079, the DNREC is -- effectively prohibits the use of natural gas furnaces to increase the cost of natural gas HVAC systems without any actual benefits to the consumer.

The requirements to implement a heat-pump-ready home will undoubtedly have a dramatic economic impact in Delaware, based on the installation cost and energy prices between gas and electricity.

2.0

For instance, if electric heat pump installations are mandated for Delaware residents, the cost of living will rise. Specifically, the average annual cost for electric ducted heat pump in Delaware would be around \$2,062, compared to around 1,632 for a natural gas furnace.

The proposed updates also preempt the Environmental Policy Conservation Act, known as EPCA, by forcing the electrification of all new residential construction and indirectly banning natural gas systems.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit recently invalidated Berkeley California's ban on natural gas infrastructure in new buildings, citing EPCA's preemption clause. This clause states that once a federal energy conservation standard is effective, no state regulations concerning energy use can apply.

Since EPCA defines energy use as energy consumed by a product at point of use, any regulation

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restricting the appliance use impacts energy -- excuse me -- use impacts energy consumption. The -- the proposal would impose unnecessary electrification requirements on new residential buildings using natural gas HVAC systems, creating costs that average citizens cannot afford.

2.0

Though natural gas systems are technically allowed, the mandated requirements effectively act as a ban due to these costs that violate EPCA's preemption prohibition as the proposal is presented. HARDI and Delaware share the goal of moving consumers --

MS. SMITH: I apologize, Mr. Titus. We do encourage you to please submit your full comment in writing. Thank you for your comment.

Next we have Kevin Brozyna. May I have Kevin Brozyna unmuted?

MR. BROZYNA: Hev.

MS. SMITH: You have -- I -- if you're listening on two different devices, you may have to turn off one of them.

MR. BROZYNA: Only on one device. Can you hear me all right?

MS. SMITH: No. The echo -- terribly

Page 34 1 bad. THE REPORTER: You'll need to mute one 2 3 device. MR. BROZYNA: Let me ask if you can 4 5 circle back. MS. SMITH: We'll do that. If you want 6 7 to log out and then re-log back in, I'll put you at 8 the end of the list. 9 MR. BROZYNA: Thank you. 10 MS. SMITH: Okay. Next to speak is 11 Thomas Marston. 12 MR. MARSTON: Good evening. I am 13 Thomas Marston. I'm a retired energy rater from 14 Delaware and Maryland. I am pleased to speak tonight 15 I am in strong support of adopting the to Delaware. 16 '24 IECC. I do not support the mandates to move to 17 Net Zero Energy Ready. 18 This is odd because I have 40 years of 19 history working in energy efficiency with my partner Ed Mitch. We were the first rater in Delaware. 2.0 21 were the first advocates to the Energy Star program. So why would I support this? 22

that we have a HERS industry that's supporting 44

I'm afraid that this mandate, given

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percent of the homes in Delaware as of '24 -- probably higher over this year -- and in 2007 when I left Delaware to move to Maryland, we were at 20 percent.

Delaware, you're doing an excellent job of moving forward because you've embraced the support of raters and moved into the above-code home programs that are available, Energy Star and DOE Zero Energy Ready.

So why are raters important? Well, Ed and I introduced innovative solutions for making sure buildings are more airtight, they have thermal bypass solutions installed, and ducts perform well. Let's look at duct work. In the 80s, duct systems in Delaware were generally returns to every bedroom that were not -- that were cavity-fed. Duct work was leaky, wasn't going to be comfortable with heat pumps.

We brought innovation to the duct system by saying, "Let's go to central returns."

Wasn't a code mandate to have a return in every room, just had to make sure it functioned well. And today, almost all buildings in Delaware use a centralized return, well-sealed because code mandates, and keep the ducts inside the building envelope.

But homes that don't have ducts in

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conditioned space, such as vented crawl spaces or flood zones -- take the -- the beach houses are not going to reach Zero Energy Ready as prescribed.

One of my greatest complements to code has been helping the development of R408.2 to be inserted into the '24. This is moving the rater knowledge of modeling into code solutions for prescriptive path.

Now consider that if you ask for 30 points, when you do this, you will most likely lead people to install R408.2.7, solar application. That will probably cut away from 405 and 406 and rater influence. I would love to add more. I'm being cut off.

MS. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Marston.

Again, we do encourage you to submit your comments in writing if you're unable to provide your full comment.

Next we have Ms. Lisa Rice. May I have

Ms. Rice unmuted?

Ms. Rice, if you are on -- logged in, please raise your hand so we can identify you. Should be a feature, if you're logged in online, to do so.

Ms. Burnette, do you have Lisa Rice?

MS. BURNETTE: I am unable to find this

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person based on the phone number or name given in the hearing registration at this time.

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MS. SMITH: Thank you. We'll move on. I don't see anyone raising their hand either. We'll move on to the next speaker, Reid Rowlands. May I have Mr. Rowlands unmuted?

MR. ROWLANDS: Yes. My name is Reid Rowlands. I'm representing myself. I'm a certified passive house consultant, having worked on many zero-energy buildings. And with my background in passive house, I have a few technical comments and questions and apologize for speaking quickly 'cause I need to get it all in.

So Section 407.2.1.1(a) requires, to get a permit, a design certification letter by FIUS. But then, below that, to get a certificate of occupancy, it requires a final certification letter or, again, a design certification letter from FIUS.

The final certification letter is fine, as it certifies as built. The design certification letter does not show as built, and so I do not believe it should be the option here.

In Section 407.2.1.2(f), it wants a statement from the FIUS project verifier. I believe

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this should be -- should say "rater." FIUS-certified verifiers usually do commercial buildings, whereas a FIUS-certified rater does residential.

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Table 408.2, additional energy efficiency requirements. If I apply for 408.2.1(7), then by default, can I apply for all the ones above and earn 25 credits, which I do not believe was the intent?

Table 408.2.1.2. I think it unlikely that a window exactly hits the 0.25 U-factor and solar heat gain coefficient of 0.40. So maybe the U-factor should be 0.25 or less.

And the solar heat gain coefficient is a little more difficult from a passive house perspective. There are times that we want to see a higher solar gain coefficient to take advantage of the heat gain in the winter, but we'll shade it during the summer.

In Section 408.2.3(1), you use "fossil fuel," but the other sections use "gas fired." Maybe for continuity, this should be "gas fired," or change all to "fossil fuel."

Section 408.2.5(2), (4), and (5). I would like you to consider changing to the "per square

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foot of enclosure" method. At the top of the section,
you penalize buildings over 5,000 square feet by
requiring an additional five points, which I like.

But here, you reward larger buildings, as the larger square footage of a building, the easier it is to get a better blower door number. It also penalizes smaller compact buildings. So the "per square foot of enclosure" method levels the playing field.

And finally, Section 4.0 is confusing to me. 4.1 reads "Except as otherwise noted in Title 16," which I take to mean requires the code to be met by January 1st for residential. I also took this to mean that it's a commercial building. Then there is the 12-month date. And then Section 4.2 seems redundant but may be meant to clarify.

I made it.

MS. SMITH: Perfect. Thank you,

19 Mr. Rowlands, for your comment.

We will now move on to Mr. Kevin Smith.

21 | May I have Mr. Smith unmuted?

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MR. SMITH: Good evening. Hi. This is

23 Kevin Smith. I'm the CEO with Habitat for Humanity of

New Castle County. Appreciate the opportunity to

speak to DNREC about this proposal. I'm here to tell you about our mission.

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We seek to put God's love into action by building homes, community, and hope. We serve first-time homebuyers, people who make between 30 and 80 percent of the area median income. These are folks who cannot get a mortgage through any other means, other than coming to Habitat.

We also work with the Delaware Housing Coalition and the Housing Alliance of Delaware and other affordable housing providers.

Our experience over the 39 years that we've been working -- we've helped build or renovate 315 homes for first-time homebuyers. And through those years, we've been supportive of different ways that we can innovate and make our homes energy-efficient.

We've worked with Energy Services Group with Tom Marston over the years to make our homes comply to Energy Star. And most recently, proud to say that we are now building Net Zero Ready homes.

However, we would not be able to build those homes to that level without the financial and consulting support of Energize Delaware and

Energize -- and New Ecology. The total extra cost to us to build to that level is 17,000 per house. So without those resources, we would not have chosen to build to that level.

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In the state of Delaware and across this country, we have an affordable housing crisis. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, the state of Delaware is short over 20,000 units of affordable housing. That's right. 20,000 units.

We already have a restrictive zoning code, and adding more restriction in our building code is only going to make this problem worse, not better. The impact on this -- on these amendments to the base 2024 IECC will hurt low-to-moderate-income people who are already getting the short shrift in the marketplace.

It is like we are requiring everybody to buy Teslas instead of just a hybrid car. So it is for that reason that we continue to support energy efficient in the base adoption of the 2024 IECC, but without these amendments that we believe will cause further harm to those that we're trying to serve. Thank you.

1 MS. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Smith.

May I have Mr. Mike O'Halloran unmuted?

MR. O'HALLORAN: Hey there. Good

4 evening. My name is Mike O'Halloran, and I'm offering

5 comments on behalf of the Mid-Atlantic Petroleum

6 Distributors Association as well as the Mid-Atlantic

7 | Propane Gas Association.

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Analyses have shown, as some of the other commenters have mentioned or alluded to -- analyses have shown that additional cost impacts of the 2024 IECC with amendments leads to an all-electric compliance cost of around \$12,000, and \$16,000 for mixed-fuel homes.

These are builder costs. These are -these are not what the homebuyer pays at the end of
the day, which would more than likely be greater.

We also see adoption of these proposed regulations as an implicit endorsement of a gas ban in favor of full electrification, something that removes customer choice. Homeowners, farmers, and businesses will no longer be able to determine what energy source makes the most sense for them and their situation when it comes to heating their homes and offices, cooking their meals, and taking a hot shower.

There's also serious concern over what full electrification will do to Delaware's grid.

There's a dearth of power generation in the state, and electricity bills are increasing dramatically already.

Taking this and adding these regulations is a formula for even higher utility bills and an overburdened power grid.

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We'd respectfully request the department to forego adoption of these regulations as currently proposed. Thank you.

MS. SMITH: Thank you for your comment.

Next we have Mr. Norm Horn.

MR. HORN: Thank you. Norm Horn, representing myself this evening. I'd actually like to decline to comment at this point. I'll submit some written comments to the record later. Thank you.

MS. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Horn.

Simon Cho. Mr. Cho, you may begin.

MR. CHO: Hi. Yes. Hello and thank you for opportunity to speak today. My name is Simon Cho. I am the president of ACC Exterior, a siding and exterior construction company based in Gaithersburg but proudly working with builders and homeowners throughout the -- Delaware.

Like many other speakers before me, I want to echo the concern they already raised about the proposed change to the energy code. I stand in full support -- energy-efficient buildings, but I also believe this is -- particular proposal goes too far and too quickly, especially at this, like, critical time when approval is record low.

As others have pointed out, the estimated 50,000 to 30 -- 30,000 dollars in additional cost per home is not a small adjustment. It's major financial hurdles. For a core contractor like us, it means, like, fewer homes being built and fewer jobs to go around and more pressure on already-tight budget.

And for working families, it could mean the difference between buying homes and being priced out completely -- completely.

The base on the 2024 IECC already represents a meaningful step toward energy efficiencies. I respectfully ask DNREC to adopt the base code without the extra provisions, the path that support both sustainability and economic realities.

I truly appreciate the thoughtful testimony I already heard today. I'm here to simply add my voice to the growing numbers of builders and

1	suppliers in residents who wants to see smart and
2	practical progress, but policies that
3	unintentionally set people back. Thank you for your
4	time and for listening to my voice like others.
5	MS. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Cho.

MS. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Cho.

And lastly, we're going to circle back around to Mr. Kevin Brozyna.

> MR. BROZYNA: Thank you very much.

Can -- can you hear me better now?

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Perfect. MS. SMITH:

I'm sorry about that MR. BROZYNA: earlier.

> MS. SMITH: It's fine.

MR. BROZYNA: Okay. Well, good evening. My name is Kevin Brozyna, and I work with K. Hovnanian Homes in Smyrna, Delaware. Thanks to DNREC for the collaboration to date on conversations and -- and the opportunity to speak this evening.

Today I'm recommending that Delaware adopt the 2024 IECC building code as written without the zero-energy-capable supplement requirements.

This approach meaningfully advances energy efficiency in new construction and keeps Delaware still at the forefront nationally and

balances the progress with responsibility by not risking unintended harm to homeowners, builders in our community from premature aggressive zero-energy mandates.

Just some background. I'm a home builder. I've personally built hundreds of Zero Energy Ready homes right here in Delaware over the past eight years. I'm a award winner of the National Housing Innovation Award for construction of Zero Energy Ready homes multiple years in a row.

As an experienced builder that has dedicated my career to advancing building performance, my testimony is not conjecture. I understand the real-world requirements for successful implementation of advanced building performance, from training and trade coordination to quality assurance, cost control, and even educating homeowners after the sale.

I'm deeply committed to advancing energy efficiency and sustainable housing. However, as currently drafted, the rapid adoption of zero-energy-capable mandates without the necessary infrastructure in -- in place creates fundamental risks, especially concerning the health of residents.

Two areas of the most serious risks

are, you know, related to HVAC and poor moisture management. Highly efficient homes are susceptible to failures in these areas when unskilled parties try to implement advanced practices without proper training. Both of these can lead to significant indoor air quality and building durability problems.

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Advocates for strong codes must prioritize occupant health and building durability, not just unsubstantiated energy targets. True market demand exists for high-performance homes. Allow the market to dictate that and consumers to seek out and choose from qualified builders who are knowledgeable on how to effectively deliver these homes.

We have to understand the extent of the stakeholder impact -- stakeholders impacted, including building code plan reviewers and inspectors, advanced equipment suppliers, trained trade partners, efficient -- energy-efficient appraisers and lenders.

If we don't properly build the process with all these players in mind, we would be like -- be like building walls and the roof of a house without first putting a foundation under it. It may look good, but there's no structure to support or sustain it.

While I commend the State and department goals of improving efficiency of the built environment, I urge the efficiency advocates, groups, and governing parties to understand the balance between efficiency and imposing overly burdensome requirements.

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Please support the implementation of the '24 IECC as the new code and work with industry stakeholders to carefully evaluate and plan for future implementation of the advanced goals.

MS. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Brozyna.

As we conclude the hearing, I want to thank you all for joining tonight. That does conclude the comment portion of the hearing as well. Again, if you wish to submit your comment in writing, please provide -- so by the instructions that were given earlier, there will be a screen shared soon that will provide that information for you on how to submit your written comments.

And especially for those who were not able to submit their written comment -- sorry -- who were not able to finish their verbal comments, please submit your comments in writing.

Ms. Burnette, can I have you share the

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1	last screen, please?
2	There it is for you. So that's the
3	ways that you can submit the written comment. And you
4	will have to do so by August 6, 2025, in order for it
5	to be made a part of the hearing record.
6	The hearing is now concluded at
7	6:53 p.m. Thank you.
8	(Whereupon, the meeting concluded at
9	6:53 p.m.)
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CERTIFICATE

2 I, CARLO FLORIO, the officer before whom the foregoing proceedings were taken, do hereby certify 3 4 that any witness(es) in the foregoing proceedings, 5 prior to testifying, were duly sworn; that the 6 proceedings were recorded by me and thereafter reduced to typewriting by a qualified transcriptionist; that said digital audio recording of said proceedings are a 9 true and accurate record to the best of my knowledge, skills, and ability; that I am neither counsel for, 10 11 related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the 12 action in which this was taken; and, further, that I 13 am not a relative or employee of any counsel or 14 attorney employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of 15 16 this action.

Conti Flair

17 CARLO FLORIO

18 Notary Public in and for the

19 State of Delaware

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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIBER

I, SONYA SOWERBY, do hereby certify that this transcript was prepared from the digital audio recording of the foregoing proceeding, that said transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings to the best of my knowledge, skills, and ability; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which this was taken; and, further, that I am not a relative or employee of any counsel or attorney employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

Jeg Ig

SONYA SOWERBY

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