



The Honorable Jeff Denham
Chairman, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure,
Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton

Number of states that have adopted building codes:

The question of how many states adopt and enforce building codes is essential to analyzing the impact of the legislation, HR 2069. During the hearing, one witness indicated that the number of states with building codes that would qualify under the bill for additional assistance was 20. This led some members of the Committee to assume that the remaining 30 states do not have building codes in place. That is not correct.

Actually, all 50 states have some building codes in place. There are several reasons for the divergence in the statistics. Because model building codes are adopted at the state or local level, some states have statewide minimums, some have state maximums, and still others do not set state requirements, but larger cities and counties in such states usually adopt both a building code for commercial buildings (like the International Building Code, or IBC) and a residential code to cover one and two family dwellings (like the International Resi

government, and FEMA, which is widely recognized as the Federal authority on disaster response and mitigation, believe that adopting current codes will reduce the impact of disasters. It will communicate in a way that other advocates cannot, that there are real benefits to the public in adopting current codes, and that the adoptions will save lives and prevent property damage. Second, the incentive, even though small, provides a tangible reward to the jurisdiction, that allows them to demonstrate to the public that their pro-active efforts to protect the public through code adoption and compliance, is recognized by FEMA. We believe the incentive will be one more weight on the scale in favor of adoption.