



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE FIRE MARSHALS

July 18, 2023

Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
2138 Rayburn House Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Jordan and Ranking Member Nadler:

On behalf of the National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM), we appreciate the House Judiciary Committee's consideration of H.R. 1631, the Protecting and Enhancing Public Access to Codes Act (Pro Codes Act), and we thank Chairman Issa, Representative Ross, and the other sponsors of the bill for their leadership on this important initiative. NASFM strongly supports passage of this critical legislation, which will protect lives, power economic development, and save taxpayer dollars.

State Fire Marshals rely solely on consensus based codes and standards for the design, construction and maintenance of buildings in America. Clearly, for over 100 years the fire safety of citizens and firefighters have been protected by the not-for-profit standards development organizations. Our fire officials would be at a huge loss if we were to lose these valuable assets.

NASFM is greatly affected and concerned by the attacks on the standard development system. Our long standing process of development through the consensus of subject matter experts coming together in a voluntary format to create these lifesaving and prevention is invaluable. To allow special interest groups to work around the copyright protection and publish this intellectual property without protection of the development process is just wrong. If this system is changed it would create unthinkable economic hardships on the taxpayers and private sector as well as jeopardize the effectiveness of lifesafety and property protection.

We are pleading with the committee to support the Pro Codes Act and to continue our codes and standards development process. Continuing the copyright protection is the necessary path forward, without exception.

Thank you again for your bipartisan leadership on this critical issue. We need Congress' support to ensure fire marshals can continue the work of protecting our states and communities from danger.

Sincerely,

Chief H. Butch Browning
Executive Director



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