



# SIERRA CLUB

## LONE STAR CHAPTER

To: The Honorable Chair DeWayne Burns

Members, House Land and Resource Management

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**The Sierra Club Supports HB 2409 by Reynolds Relating to the residential and commercial building codes of municipalities.**

### **Time to Update our Building Codes!**

Buildings don't last forever but they do last a long time. Today, we have a patchwork of code adoptions in our municipalities, with some still on older codes like the 2009 International Residential and International Building Codes, while some of the larger cities have begun adopting the 2021 codes.

HB 2409 would raise all boats by making the 2021 IBC and 2021 IRC the official statewide code in municipalities. While the state recently did update the code to the 2012 standard, it is important to note that building science has improved in recent years, and buildings built to more modern codes are more energy and water efficient, better able to withstand climate extremes and hurricanes, and generally superior.

Given our changing climate, weather extremes and water and electric supply issues, updating our codes to the most modern codes currently published only makes sense.

Hb 2409 would accomplish this by raising the minimum municipal code for new construction based on the 2021 International Residential Code and the 2021 International Commercial Code. The bill would require any city not currently on the 2021 codes to begin a process to adopt the code by December 1, 2023. The code would become the state code on January 1, 2024.

The 2021 codes are safer, more efficient and have incorporated issues related to hurricanes and floods. Most counties and cities along the Gulf Coast have already adopted at least the 2018 codes, as these then are covered by windstorm insurance.

With billions spent after every flood and hurricane, in large part because buildings built to older codes fail, often with catastrophic results, protecting our citizens by requiring better buildings is good public policy.