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June 8, 2010

John Cochran, Chair  
Washington State Building Code Council  
128 10th Avenue SW  
Post Office Box 42525  
Olympia, Washington 98504-2525

Dear Chairman Cochran:

I am writing to request that the Washington State Building Code Council take action to delay the effective date of the new state building energy code, for a period of nine months, until April 1, 2011.

In my meeting with the Council of Economic Advisors last week, it is clear that the recovery of the construction industry is central to the recovery of our state's economy. While construction numbers are starting to level off, the federal tax incentives that contributed to the improvement have now lapsed. As a result, there are serious questions regarding whether conditions will get better or worse.

I do not like having to make this request – I would clearly prefer to see the new energy code implemented on schedule. We must improve the energy efficiency of our homes in order to succeed in the new clean energy economy. From the Council's work, it is clear that the increased costs of the improvements today will be offset by the savings in future energy costs.

However, I believe a temporary delay is necessary to allow the construction industry to stabilize. We cannot risk further delay of our state recovery, or worse, a deepening recession. The needs of our families and communities for jobs, and a healthy economy, must take precedent.

A delay of nine months would allow completion of this construction season, a better read on available financing, and a clear sense of how the economic recovery is proceeding. It would also apply the new energy code in time for 2011 construction season, and get us back on track for making progress with energy efficiency.

Sincerely,

Christine O. Gregoire  
Governor

