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March 3, 2023

Representative Chuck Isenhardt
PO Box 3353
Dubuque, IA 52004

Dear Representative Isenhardt,

The City of Dubuque would like to express strong objection to Senate File 479 (formerly SF334), a bill for an act repealing energy conservation requirements for new construction. This decision will have a significant impact on our economy, environment, and health.

Energy conservation is an important issue that affects all of us, and the building sector plays a critical role in achieving energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The energy code requirements that were in place helped to ensure that new buildings were constructed with energy-efficient measures and technologies and ensures Iowa's homeowners are not burdened with high operating costs when purchasing or renting a home in our state.

Furthermore, the lack of energy-efficient standards can lead to poor indoor air quality, lower thermal comfort levels, and other health and safety risks associated with buildings that do not meet minimum energy performance requirements and disproportionately impact low-income households with lower incomes. A lack of energy efficiency standards typically affects how low-cost housing is built. Low income and fixed income homeowners or renters, for whom utility bills are a much more significant percentage of their income and expenses, are particularly hard hit by low energy efficiency housing. It will also decrease demand for clean energy jobs and products, which could affect economic growth in Iowa.

Local government, businesses, universities and many other entities are preparing ourselves to compete favorably for federal grants and contracts related to making Iowa a resilient, energy smart and independent place. This repeal serves to lower our chances for competitive funding. Additionally, the current standards benefit all Iowans as they reduce the total cost of ownership for our homes and buildings. This lowers the cost of living in Iowa and frees up money to be spent in other ways by homeowners and renters, who will use those savings to improve their lives.

Conservation and thrift are core values for many Iowans, who look to the state to ensure resources are not needlessly wasted, including energy resources. We appreciate your work and opposition of this bill.

In partnership,

Gina Bell

Sustainable Community Coordinator