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January 29, 2016

Mark Blanke, PE, Assistant Director for Code Development
NYS Department of State, Division of Administration and Enforcement
99 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12231-0001

Re: State Energy Conservation Code Effective Date

Dear Mr. Blanke,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Department of State's proposed adoption of an updated State Energy Conservation Construction Code. We applaud the Department's efforts to improve the Energy Code, but we request that the Department extend its proposed effective date to January 1, 2017.

The American Institute of Architects New York (AIANY) represents over 5,200 registered architects and associated design and construction professionals practicing in all five boroughs of New York City. Our mission is to advocate for laws that allow New York City to remain the premier global city for architecture and an exemplar of progressive urbanism, while ensuring the economic welfare of our professional class.

AIANY is partaking in a sustained push for initiatives that reduce carbon emissions in the built environment and create healthy spaces for New Yorkers to live and work, recognizing that both public and private sectors must undergo large-scale changes. AIANY supports updating and improving the energy codes, and we applaud the work of the State Code Council; however, AIANY has concerns about imposing these improvements without adequately preparing industry professionals and compliance officials to adequately prepare for the upgrades.

The 90 day lead-time currently proposed is insufficient for properly notifying and training our members in New York City, let alone the broader community of design professionals in New York State. AIANY is currently collaborating with AIA New York State and our colleagues at the Urban Green Council to host a series of trainings in New York City. We also hope to work closely with the NYC Department of Buildings on additional outreach and education. A January 1, 2017 effective date will improve compliance long term and help to better prepare architects for the upcoming code changes over the next several years.

In addition, the current effective date would cause logistical and financial burdens for building projects in progress. Most buildings require a design process of one year or more. By imposing the new Energy Code requirements in 90 days, owners might be forced to re-design energy systems, which can be a time-consuming and costly task.

Extending the effective date of the new Energy Code to January 1, 2017 will allow for improved energy efficiency while addressing the needs of architects and other professionals.

Thank you for your consideration.



Carol Loewenson, FAIA
2016 President, AIA New York