Shaping Tomorrow's Global Built Environment Today

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ASHRAE Society President, 2025-2026

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January 16, 2026

The Honorable Terrell McKinney
Committee on Urban Affairs
Nebraska State Capitol
1445 K St,
Lincoln, NE 68508

RE: NE LB 800 "Adopt updates to building and energy codes"

Dear Chairman McKinney:

I am writing on behalf of ASHRAE, the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air Conditioning Engineers. We are a professional and technical society of more than 55,000 members dedicated to energy efficiency, indoor air quality, resiliency, and sustainability in the built environment. Through our Society's research, standards writing, publishing, certification, and continuing education, ASHRAE shapes tomorrow's global built environment today. As one of the premier subject matter experts on the built environment, and on behalf of our 415 members in the state of Nebraska, we wish to convey our support of NE LB 800 and urge for its swift passage in your committee.

LB 800 would, if passed, adopt a more modern energy code in Nebraska, the 2024 edition of the International Energy Conservation Code. This model code references several ASHRAE standards and includes ANSI/ASHRAE/IES Standard 90.1-2022 as an alternative compliance pathway for commercial construction. Adoption and use of the most up to date energy codes and standards creates a healthier, more resilient built environment, while also benefiting the state's economy and lowering energy costs for Nebraskans.

According to Department of Energy studies on the 2021 IECC, the prior edition of this energy code, a family living in a home built to this more modern code should expect to save $163 per year on their utility bills.[1] For commercial construction, the energy efficiency gains are so substantial and the upfront costs are so minimal that in most cases the owner could expect to see an immediate payback period – the

[1] "Nebraska Can Save Energy, Money, and Mitigate the Effects of Climate Change through Building Energy Codes." n.d. Accessed February 13, 2025. https://www.energycodes.gov/sites/default/files/2021-07/EED_1365_BROCH_StateEnergyCodes_states_NEBRASKA.pdf.

savings on their first utility bill would fully cancel out any increased upfront construction costs.[2] We believe that for the 2024 IECC the gains would be even greater, and the upfront construction cost changes even less substantial.

There are also community wide resilience improvements created by having a more energy efficient building stock in Nebraska. When extreme weather hits, buildings that are drawing less power help the grid stay online for everyone. If the power does go out during extreme weather, buildings constructed to a modern energy standard keep their occupants safer for longer than buildings constructed to outdated codes.[3]

Finally, there is job creation and savings for taxpayers associated with adopting a modern code. The money that will be saved on utility bills will circulate in Nebraska's economy. Subsequently, adopting the 2024 IECC is expected to create over 100 jobs in the first year after adoption.[4] Taxpayers will also benefit because they will not be on the hook for paying unnecessarily high utility bills for public buildings constructed to outdated codes.

For these reasons, ASHRAE supports the adoption of the 2024 IECC proposed by this legislation, and we urge swift passage of NE LB 800 in your committee. This will benefit the people of Nebraska by saving them money, increasing resiliency, and creating jobs. If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact GovAffairs@ashrae.org. Thank you for your work to improve building performance and improve the lives of Nebraska residents.

Sincerely,
Bill McQuade
ASHRAE Society President, 2025-2026

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[2] Tyler, M, Y Xie, E Poehlman, and M Rosenberg. 2021. "Choose an Item. Cost-Effectiveness of ANSI/ASHRAE/IES Standard 90.1-2019 for Nebraska." https://www.energycodes.gov/sites/default/files/2021-07/Cost-effectiveness_of_ASHRAE_Standard_90-1-2019-Nebraska.pdf.

[3] Franconi, Ellen, Luke Troup, Mark Weimar, Yunyang Ye, Chitra Nambiar, Jeremy Lerond, Eliza Hotchkiss, et al. 2023. "Enhancing Resilience in Buildings through Energy Efficiency Pacific Northwest National Laboratory." https://www.energycodes.gov/sites/default/files/2023-07/Efficiency_for_Building_Resilience_PNNL-32727_Rev1.pdf.

[4] Salcido, Victor, Yan Chen, Yulong Xie, and Zachary Taylor. 2021. "Choose an Item. Cost-Effectiveness of the 2021 IECC for Residential Buildings in Nebraska." https://www.energycodes.gov/sites/default/files/2021-07/NebraskaResidentialCostEffectiveness_2021.pdf.