



**Governor Ned Lamont
State of Connecticut**



FACT SHEET
2020 Legislative Session

House BILL 5008
***AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF HIGH PERFORMANCE GREEN BUILDING
STANDARDS FOR VOLUNTARY ADOPTION BY MUNICIPALITIES***

Summary of Proposal:

This proposal allows a municipality to adopt building codes that lower the negative environmental impact of buildings. Public Act 19-35 entitled, “The Green Economy and Environmental Protection” directed the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to develop a High Performance Building Standard that would apply to state funded buildings. This bill would allow municipalities to adopt this standard or “stretch building code” for buildings built in their jurisdiction.

Reason for Proposal:

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, buildings are responsible for approximately 40% of the energy use and greenhouse gas emissions in the United States. Buildings are assets with long lives, so getting the building constructed to be energy efficient from the start has a significant impact on energy use and greenhouse gas emissions over the life of the building. A stretch building code is an alternative to the base building code that requires better energy performance for a building. Stretch codes are designed to be cost effective – any increased upfront cost is offset by the savings from the energy use over the life of the building. The legislation proposed allows municipalities to adopt the stretch building code if it is right for their community. Stretch codes are typically based on codes developed by the International Code Council which partners with the U.S. Department of Energy’s Building Energy Codes Program.

Significant Impacts:

Public Act 08-98, referred to as the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA) requires 80 percent greenhouse gas emissions reductions by 2050. In 2018, the Governor’s Council on Climate Change (GC3) recommended that the state must reduce its building sector emissions by 34 percent by 2030 to meet the 2050 requirement. Reducing the greenhouse gas emissions from buildings by improving the energy efficiency of the buildings is a key action needed to meet the 2050 emissions target.

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Massachusetts has a stretch code that over 200 municipalities have voluntarily adopted. New York has adopted a stretch code, NYStretch Energy Code – 2020, that will provide energy savings of 11% over their next base code. Rhode Island has a stretch code based on the International Green Construction Code and the U.S. Department of Energy’s Zero Energy Ready Homes program that is voluntary. Stretch codes are a key strategy to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from our building sector.