



Position Statement

Building and Fire Codes

POSITION

The Building Owners and Managers Association of Greater Los Angeles (BOMA/GLA) recognizes the paramount importance of building and fire codes in safeguarding the well-being of tenants and ensuring the structural integrity of commercial buildings.

Codes and regulations play a pivotal role in providing a clear and standardized framework for building management. However, it is essential to strike a balance between safety and the efficient operation of commercial properties. While well-crafted codes enhance safety and security, unnecessary or burdensome regulations can impede economic growth and tenant success in the community.

As such, BOMA/GLA advocates for a comprehensive approach to code development and implementation that accommodates the concerns of building owners and managers.:

- **Inclusivity in Code Development:** BOMA/GLA supports a transparent and inclusive system for developing building and fire codes. This system should enable input from commercial building owners and managers, promoting a collaborative approach to code development. We also endorse efforts to streamline the code development process to enhance efficiency.
- **Evidence-Based Code Adoption:** BOMA/GLA favors the adoption of codes that have been substantiated by experts across sectors, as these measures enhance building safety and reduce risks. Simultaneously, we oppose superfluous codes and regulations that lack expert input and impose undue hurdles and costs on building ownership.
- **Flexibility in Code Implementation:** We support policies that provide building ownership with a range of options for executing building codes in a manner that is most fitting and cost-effective for their specific properties, unless there is a proven need for broader standardization. Additionally, we recognize the importance of creating flexibility in compliance/interpretation and suggest outlining a process for alternative methods of compliance when strict adherence is not feasible for any reason.
- **Reasonable Transition Periods:** BOMA/GLA advocates for policies that allow building ownership reasonable time to transition to new codes. This will mitigate the unreasonable cost of frequent code changes on property ownership and tenants.
- **Clarity in Code Triggers and Alignment:** We support policies that clearly define the triggers for new codes to take effect and encourage alignment between government

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departments on these matters. Code changes should avoid conflict between State and local requirements.

- **Government Resources for Efficiency:** BOMA/GLA calls for additional government resources to ensure that the code development process runs efficiently and effectively. Adequate resources are crucial for maintaining safety while minimizing disruptions to building operations.

BACKGROUND

BOMA/GLA has a longstanding history of collaboration with the California Building Standards Commission and the L.A. City Fire and Building and Safety Departments. This partnership spans over 30 years and has facilitated discussions on tenant improvements and potential changes to state codes. It has contributed to a better understanding of the challenges and limitations faced in the regulated environment.

Additionally, we have developed stronger relationships with fire departments and building and safety departments in other cities, like Pasadena, El Segundo, Santa Monica, and Long Beach, which has helped us incorporate different perspectives for approaching the built environment.

Our collaboration with State code officials extends to the BOMA California representatives, who receive our input on various code issues, from construction materials and gray water to fire safety and elevators. While public safety remains paramount, the complexity of plan reviews and conflicting decisions across departments adds to the cost of doing business in Greater Los Angeles and can create ambiguity in the implementation of new codes.

As local governments in Los Angeles County set ambitious safety, waste reduction, and security goals, BOMA/GLA is committed to ensuring that these policies are realistic and achievable for building owners and managers. We recognize the need to protect the public while also respecting practical concerns in the real world.

CONCLUSION

BOMA/GLA views its ongoing collaboration with local government as indispensable for developing and implementing codes that prioritize public safety while addressing the genuine concerns of building owners and managers. Through transparency, evidence-based decisions, flexibility, and efficiency, we can strike the right balance between safeguarding lives and property and ensuring the economic vitality of Greater Los Angeles.

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