

Woodruff - HB1334 Testimony
Estimating 2 minutes of time
House Transportation, Housing, and Local Government
Committee estimated to begin at 1:30 pm

3-MINUTE VERSION

Good afternoon Chair Froelich & Committee Members, I am Pitkin County Commissioner Jeffrey Woodruff. I previously served for two years on the Wildfire Resiliency Code Board as a Colorado Licensed Architect, appointed by the Department of Public Safety and representing the American Institute of Architects. Pitkin County adopted the Wildfire Resiliency Code in March, with the help of DFPC, and I am here in strong opposition to any further delay in implementation.

While serving on the Board, we deliberated and consulted in public settings throughout the state. Every meeting included opportunities for public input. In addition to relying on the knowledge of the board and ex officio members, we relied on the expertise of the ICC, NFPA, IBHS, and NIST. The Board consulted with districts in Colorado who had previously adopted WUI codes for their expertise and lessons learned. We took lessons from Colorado fires like Waldo and Marshall; touring the path of fast fires in Colorado.

The legislature already provided an extension to the code adoption timeframe last year. Today, our state is facing the lowest snowpack ever in recorded history (and we have already been under Red Flag/Fire Restriction Warnings in Eagle and Pitkin County areas, in March). Now is the time to implement these codes that were developed based on the latest science and building materials that are available today. Any further delay just increases uncertainty for the insurance industry, which we cannot afford at a time when Colorado is experiencing some of the highest insurance increases in the country. Here is what we all know, sometimes personally - this isn't just about costs - any further delay increases the very real risk of further property damage and, in the worst cases, loss of life.

We understand there are counties who do not have a local building department or officials to support the implementation of these life safety codes. There are two cases where the State of Colorado should work with authorities having jurisdiction-

- 1) Those local governments who may have had the (misunderstood) belief that the WUI code did not apply to them and hence were ill prepared for timely adoption or
- 2) jurisdictions making a good-faith effort to comply, and may be working with DFPC code educators. In these cases the jurisdiction will not face penalties while they work to meet the code.

For communities who this is a financial lift then, reaching out to DFPC code educators and/or seeking funding through (for example) Headwaters Economics in order to build capacity locally through the Community Planning Assistance for Wildfire program as they review and adopt this statewide life safety code.

In other words, there are solutions available to support these jurisdictions. None of those solutions should include further delay.

Fire is coming. Fast fire is coming. Wildfire is coming. Now is the time to protect Coloradans, provide certainty to insurers, and we can do that while implementing the wildfire resiliency codes already passed by the legislature and supporting those communities who need it. Please vote no on this bill today. Thank you for your time.

2-MINUTE VERSION

Good afternoon **Chair Froelich and** Committee Members, I am Pitkin County Commissioner Jeffrey Woodruff. I previously served for two years on the Colorado Wildfire Resiliency Code Board as a Licensed Architect, appointed by the Department of Public Safety. Pitkin County adopted the Wildfire Resiliency Code in March, with the help of DFPC, and I am here in strong opposition to any further delay in implementation of code.

While serving on the Board, we deliberated and consulted in public settings throughout the state. Every board meeting and sub-committee meeting included opportunities for public input. In addition to relying on the knowledge of the board and ex officio members, we depended on the expertise of the ICC, NFPA, IBHS, Headwater Economics and NIST.

The Board consulted with districts in Colorado who had previously adopted WUI codes for their know how and lessons learned. We took lessons from Colorado fires like Waldo and Marshall; the code board toured the path of previous fast fires in Colorado.

The legislature already provided an extension to the code adoption timeframe last year. Today, our state is facing the lowest snowpack ever in recorded history, and we have already been under Red Flag/Fire Restriction Warnings in Eagle and Pitkin County in March.

Now is the time to implement these codes that were developed based on the latest science and building materials that are available today. Any further delay just increases uncertainty for the insurance industry, which we cannot afford at a time when Colorado is experiencing some of the highest insurance rates and percentage rate increases in the country. Here is what we all know, sometimes personally - this isn't just about costs - any further delay increases the very real risk of further property damage and, in the worst cases, loss of life.

We understand there are counties who do not have local building officials to support implementing these life safety codes. There are solutions available to support them. None of those solutions should include further delay.

Fire is coming. Fast fire is coming. Wildfire is coming. Now is the time to protect Coloradans, provide certainty to insurers, and we can do that while implementing the wildfire resiliency codes already passed by the legislature and supporting those communities who need it. Please vote no on this bill today. Thank you for your time.