

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
80R4173 SGA-D

S.B. 658
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Under current law, the General Land Office is authorized to develop an energy-efficient building accreditation program (program) for buildings that exceed by 15 percent or more the building energy performance standard under Section 388.003 (Adoption of Building Energy Efficiency Performance Standards), Health and Safety Code. However, the 78th Legislature, Regular Session, 2003, did not appropriate revenue necessary for implementation of the program.

As proposed, S.B. 658 transfers the program to the Texas Residential Construction Commission and authorizes a certification fee to be set to cover administration of the program and any related education efforts.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subtitle D, Title 16, Property Code, by adding Chapter 431, as follows:

CHAPTER 431. ENERGY-EFFICIENT BUILDING ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

Sec. 431.001. ENERGY-EFFICIENT BUILDING ACCREDITATION PROGRAM. (a) Defines "National Housing Act."

(b) Authorizes the Texas Residential Construction Commission (commission), in consultation with the Energy Systems Laboratory at the Texas Engineering Experiment Station of the Texas A&M University System (laboratory), the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, and an advisory committee appointed by the commission, to establish an energy-efficient building accreditation program (program) for buildings that exceed the building energy performance standards under Section 388.003 (Adoption of Building Energy Efficiency Performance Standards), Health and Safety Code, by 15 percent or more.

(c) Requires the commission, in consultation with the laboratory, if the commission establishes a program under this chapter, to update the program on or before December 1st of each even-numbered year using the best available energy-efficient building practices.

(d) Requires the program, if established by the commission under this chapter, to include a checklist system to produce an energy-efficient building scorecard to help home buyers compare potential homes and, by providing a copy of the completed scorecard to a mortgage lender, qualify for energy-efficient mortgages under the National Housing Act and to help communities qualify for emissions reduction credits by adopting codes that meet or exceed the energy-efficient building or energy performance standards established under Chapter 388 (Texas Building Energy Performance Standards), Health and Safety Code.

Sec. 431.002. PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM. Authorizes the commission to establish a public information program to inform homeowners, sellers, buyers, and others regarding energy-efficient building ratings.

Sec. 431.003. MEASUREMENT SYSTEM FOR REDUCTION IN ENERGY AND EMISSIONS. Requires the laboratory, if the commission establishes a program under this chapter, to establish a system to measure the reduction in energy and emissions produced under the program and report those savings to the commission.

Sec. 431.004. CERTIFICATION FEE. Authorizes the commission, if the commission establishes a program under this chapter, to set a certification fee sufficient to cover the cost of administering the program and pay for any education efforts conducted under this chapter.

SECTION 2. Repealer: Section 388.009 (Energy-Efficient Building Program), Health and Safety Code.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2007.