

RCII-5 Comments
Recommendation 5
"Beyond Code" building design incentives and mandatory programs

Make sure State-built buildings exceed targets mandated for all. That is the only way for the State to see places for improvements.

The economic impacts of any legislation must be determined and be a part of the decision.

If there are sufficient saving to be had the private and public sector will make the decision to make changes. No mandates are helpful to small town businesses that are struggling.

Government meddling/incentives rarely result in progress. Montana should be working to remove barriers to progress not impeding them by adding bureaucracy that adds no value to the end product. Furthermore, this report was based on a politically correct directive which assumes there is a man-made climate crisis. While this assumption has the backing of the media and politicians it has little support from the scientific community. Hence the reporting by the media of the relative minority that support the theory.

need incentives to help farmers reduce their energy costs and should include water management needs to address drought

Incentives are always good idea. That gives the consumer/builder the option to take advantage of the incentives if it fits the situation, but we don't need more impact fees or fast-track permitting for codes, and more government intervention.

I am absolutely opposed to impact fees for any reason.

There should be a cost/benefit analysis required. Montana has a poor average income and the economy is not well diversified. The benefits do not justify the costs using sound science.

These types of %s are not enforceable if the cost is prohibitive. And idealistic caps that are abandoned and unenforced because of cost (or other reasons) cause citizens to become cynical of their government.

Could be difficult to maintain. Important to keep goals challenging but attainable.

While I agree with the first item listed here under possible solutions, I'm not sure I fully agree with the second one.

As long as these don't turn into give aways to business owners with little or no corresponding energy benefit.

I fully support incentives but I'm completely opposed to mandatory programs. Focus on new construction or remodels, not forcing existing buildings to retrofit.

Train the workforce. Explain the benefits to making energy efficient homes, homew with renewable energy. Workers would not have to travel great distances in order to find work. For example, friends travel to Colstrip to earn a living. Local energy, i.e. self-sufficiency at home would create more jobs in concentrated areas/cities.

Only if incentives were generated by building pemits, not taxpayers dollars!!!!

same comment as for RC11-4

Build to take advantage of solar heating through passive systems, adds little to cost and can provide big pay back.

More, bigger government - no thanks.

When you force a landlord to make these improvements where will the an increase in rental costs be distributed? Will the landlord will take the loss?

Stop subsidizing bad behavior. Prohibit public funds being used for inefficient private, commercial, and public structures. A structure would NOT qualify for use of public funds for weatherization, for example, more than once. That would encourage permanent changes, instead of BandAids.

The first set is to make homes and building shells as efficient as possible and then look at the heating equipment and lower the baseload. Then you can look at alternative renewable technologies. A inefficient house or building with alternative renewable technologies saves NOTHING!!!

Again, no "mandatory" anything.

Market incentives alone will not change the race for the minimum acceptable product.

Especially rooftop solar systems. I do not particularly support large-scale industrial-style corporate wind farms and their accompanying transmission lines!

Incentives to upgrade existing buildings would be great but not mandatory programs. Also I don't believe the level of suggested energy reductions is at all achievable.

individuals can only do so much with this issue, we need strong and numerous government action of many forms and formats...

If "beyond code" really produces quantifiable savings, it should be a natural for homeowners to do, without the heavy hand of government.

I agree with the incentives, but do not support imposing mandatory programs.

no reference to cost to the consumers

Look to the UN-intended consequences. Let the market do it's job. Like most government involvement in an issue, it is well intentioned, but will ultimately make the situation more cumbersome and expensive.

Should have a higher percentage than 10 for renewables. Also should encourage the use of recycled building materials.

good luck

This should be a standard.

Permit fast-tracking would require additional personnel for review & inspection. Once again, this would require revenue from the state to local agencies.

Maybe for state government/public only. I would not support this recommendation for any privately owned buildings or businesses.

Yes,lets tax more and grow government. That will really help.

Renewable energy percentage and energy use reductions are not realistic.

This would cause substantial additional costs in design/modeling of building projects. Standards would have to be clear and reliable for engineering and energy modelling.
Would rather see the goal be 40-50% for existing buildings by 2020.

this is the right direction. the governemnt can provide incentives, but it should not legislate anything. on the contrary, the government should start giving us back our ability to make perosnal choices and our personal freedom.

I don't think the state can afford to use only tax credits to support these "incentives". A revenue source is needed, or incentives that generate revenue from non cooperators.

Mandatory third party verification of energy efficiency is a requirement. Many buildings and building programs claim energy efficiency, however do not specifically verify the efficiency. Anyone or anything can claim to be efficient, but a third party rating system (LEED type program) should be a requiremet.

Acceptable only if done on an incentive basis, not as a mandate.

Incentives - Yes, Mandatory - NO

State "mandantory" programs always seem to cost me money

Loan incentives must consider cash-flow impacts. It helps little if the state offers a low interest loan but requires principle and interest payments in addition to that paid under a mortgage.

To be effective, this would require local government to have the capacity to enforce.

Today we have forgotten simple, efficient and the concept of appropriate technology. We are high-tech oriented and prone to inefficiency. Case in point is my passive solar addition that saves more energy than anything they are giving credits for today. Conservation, simple and as basic as it gets. It will not wear out and last the life of the building. Stuff they give credits for is high-tech, expensive, has significantly reduced benefits due to embodied energy, and will wear out or quit working. My, how short our memories are.

I would give this a 5 but for the impact fees. That looks like an invitation for financial mischief making.

Once again this could be a real detriment to small businesses if they are required to spend significant dollars with no incentives and little additional benefit.

Use the carrot approach (incentives & fast track)), not the stick approach (fees).

What is meant by "Fast track"? Sounds like a weasel term which would allow circumvention of the rules.

Little additional value for a lot more cost.

I would recommend using non-financial incentives such as expedited permitting. Merely recognizing achievement has been very successful with programs like LEED.

Need to avoid using mandates. Should encourage with incentives rather than enforcement.

I am very opposed to impact fees. Impact fees add to the cost of housing and a lack of affordable housing is already an issue in Montana.

OK AS GOALS BUT NOT AS REGULATIONS OR STANDARDS. I WOULD CHECK 3 BUT DON'T LIKE THE SOUND OF FEES AND CODES.

The three principal areas of immediate government effectiveness to combat global warming are: energy/fuel efficiency, clean coal technology, and alternative energy.

Build smarter, not bigger. Also, discourage sprawl, which releases carbon from native lands and hugely increases emissions from cars.

GREAT!

Improve incentives but no mandate.

The market should provide enough of an incentive without distorting it. No fees - no fast tracking.

Business is likely to respond to incentives rather than fees to come here.

Build smarter!!NOT Bigger!! Infilling is important. Stop sprawl.

Provide specific incentives to local town and city governments to develop alternative energy and energy conservation programs.

Ok on incentives no on impact fees.

Who will pay for this? Has the consumer been advised of these increase with the amount being quantified? The people living in poverty and properties such as rentals will be hit the hardest. These are the individuals least able to afford the increased costs.

Offering incentives is fine for those who want to evaluate the alternatives, don't just mandate change. Let it be their choice.

have to be careful with impact fees. will need incentives to offset these or it could crash and burn and make the economy stale/stagnant

A 50% reduction in energy use is a significant amount that would only be possible with much greater up front costs. Any legislation for green or sustainable codes will adversely affect housing affordability, and can not come before a statewide code process. Without the statewide code, this would surely encourage sprawl even further from our population centers and undermine the objective and effectiveness of any reduction targeting mandates.

With the prices rapidly increasing, conserving natural resources is a matter the free market can handle without government involvement.

The incentive side sounds reasonable. Mandates are vague and troubling.

some folks simply can not afford to have a new home built as it stands now. Placing more regulations on the housing industry will cause even more people to buy manufactured housing units, which tend to have less energy efficiency than built-on-site homes offer.

Incentives, in the form of tax breaks, for increased efficiency is a proven working solution. Impact fees punish people needlessly. Particularly the poor who may not be able to afford upgrading their homes, etc. I would only support this initiative if some other government programs/corporate welfare was eliminated first (to cover the cost of an incentive program).

I think the market will force home owners to conserve

Yet more snooping, spying, and forcing.

A great carrot. We need carrots and sticks.

I could support tax cuts for energy efficient buildings. This would require reduced State government spending in other areas. I do not support the addition of bureaucracy to manage such a program, nor increased permit or impact fee costs.

Do you even realize how cold it gets in Montana? We've had record snow this year.

incentives for older buildings yes, only if costs are feasible, new buildings mandatory

Incentives sound good but impact fees are again a way to discourage growth and raise costs for everyone. I really hate the use of "mandatory" anything. Look where mandatory sentencing has gotten us.

I believe these percentages should actually be much higher.

Only if no gov't spending is required.

Why drift from the free market? I see this as big brother trying to run our lives!

This Action Plan was not a Montana grassroots Plan. It was the same plan written for California and other states.

<http://www.righttalk.com/asx/ggws.asx> The above video destroys the myth of human caused global warming. Get informed. The truth shall make you free.

More Governmental control, need incentives to want to exercise green alternatives

More costs added to commercial construction adds to the incentive for businesses to operate outside of Montana

Incentives that promote renewable energy will further negate the need for RCII-4. Mandating impact fees on the consumer to fund more government oversight is never a good practice to promote growth and economic development.

In Montana with approx. 250,000 homes adding window, doors, insulation, etc. to existing home would cost in excess of 10,000 per home, that is an total of over \$2,500,000,000 expenditure, who will foot that bill, the taxpayer ultimately either by increased taxes or out of the pocket expense for doing the work. this plan Nationally would cost nearly \$800 billion dollar, one fourth the projected National budget for 2008

Immense costs to private property owners and government, dis-incentive to new business or businesses looking to relocate to the state. I like the way you slip in "mandatory" in the title. fast track permitting should be the norm not the privilege of the wealthy that can afford to pay extra to place the more expensive technology in place.

No more permit codes or government controls.

Again, forcing businesses and individuals to comply will be costly for everyone, and probably not effective. Offer incentives instead.

Again, not the business of government.

Start now encouraging conservation -- lights off, thermostats lower in winter, higher in summer!

Who is going to pay for these incentives? Us the tax payer? No thank you!

I feel that this will drive some existing businesses out. There are already businesses that have been working toward reducing their energy consumption and it would be almost impossible to credit those for changes that they have already made and therefore difficult for them to reduce an additional 20% or 50%. The additional fees would make some future building prohibitive.

Incentives are great, but the cost of these incentives should be born by all one segment of society. I.e. General fund expenditure not a tax on a certain segment to benefit the few.

These all come with a cost that is passed on to the consumer or taxpayer.

I would up goal reduce 35% in existing buildings and 75% in new buildings by 2020.

Incentives are great, but the cost of these incentives should be born by all one segment of society. I.e. General fund expenditure not a tax on a certain segment to benefit the few.

should not need additional incentives to reduce energy usage and thereby energy cost. unnecessary burdon on taxpayers

Philosophically this sounds good but in reality you would be putting one more nail in the coffin of small business, many of whom are already struggling.

I like incentives and this method could work well with both residential and non-residential buildings.

You need to improve incentives ~ but talk to the local governments immediately to get their input.

A noble goal, but should be left at that

Strongly oppose. The building industry is already listening to their customers (me) who are requesting energy efficient products (ie R-Control, etc). Government does not need to be adding new regs.

I am not happy with fast-track aggression for anything. We need to educate and move steadily but not run over people without input from all angles. Dominating other voices is the cause of our ignorance in living together well.

Forcing conservation onto commercial and industrial users is the wrong approach. I support incentives in this realm, but not mandates. Additionally, we should be looking at reducing peak usage and providing incentive to consume power in off-peak timeframes as an addition/alternative to overall conservation.

Again I would say move it up to 2015 for both targets.

Money is always a good incentive for those who think only within their caves; and I fear that is the majority.

probably not attainable politically or financially

This is just going to increase housing costs for those who can afford it the least in homes, and hinder new commercial development even more than it already is.

The construction industry will eventually become an ally of efforts to renovate existing buildings, and policy makers will eventually recognize the high potential to encourage job formation in this renovation.

tax breaks for the rich

Timeline should be moved up. Materials already available as are designs.

No.

These are great ideas, but could we make it happen before 2020?

Too little too late, but a step in the right direction. Approve it now, improve it (strengthen it) later.

As above. Economic decisions are based on cost and timely returns on investment, not feeling good. Real people have budgets.

With the elimination of impact fees my support for this program could grow

Focus on the incentive side, not any new regulations!!!

Incentives should be positive, the market can impose the negatives. The state should not be garnishing us nor is it efficient enough to use funds collected effectively enough through agencies.

If you can save people money by providing incentives, people will jump onboard the green band wagon, that is what we need.

Efficiency improvements must still be cost effective.

Who is going to pay for these incentives?

Lots of room for improvement now. Roof and eave overhangs should be designed to shade rooms in summer while allowing for heat and light to enter efficient window design.

50% is too low of a bar for new construction and we have already at our home reduced our energy use by far more than 20%. With the help from the wind.

Taxpayer money spent.

Business owners are already looking at ways to reduce their energy costs and improve their energy efficiency to improve their bottom line. The state does not have to stick its nose in this. I am very much opposed to impact fees or additional permitting.

Impact fees, definitely. Pay for your choices

Needs a lot more analysis to understand cost to consumers and overall impact on business development.

a needed step.

This would drive up the cost of living making it harder for the citizens of the state to continue to live here.

While we approve of the use of incentives, this recommendation contains hard targets that will lead to increased costs to consumers.

Again, should include nuclear energy along with renewable energy generation.

More communistic incentives. "Demand." We are free citizens ... we don't need government demanding that we do as we are told.

From what date would the recommended reduction be calculated. For those of us that have improved energy use over the years, that would be important, as in this 40+ years old home.

This should be left for the market to establish.

NO MANDATES!

All of these are 'feel good' expensive bulls**t legislation. Global warming is NOT a fact (cold records set last winter in the southern hemisphere) so it might be Northern hemisphere warming, but not global. Secondly, latest studies of the sun spots (that control global temperatures more than humans) indicate that within 20 years we will be back in a 'mini-ice age'. Not politically correct, but MUCH more accurate.

It should be more than 10% from renewable energy.

Another set of government grants? Sure, that works as long as you contribute to the politician's campaigns.

Too many regulations already.

Again - the cost would be excessive!!

Inherent costs of need for more government oversight.

Start enforcing codes on new buildings to force green codes, ie, builders should be made to build new buildings that conform to green technology.

Goal is too small and the time line too long. Goals of 50% for existing and 90% for new structures is quite achievable. All fossil fuels should be eliminated.

I am all for incentives and paying for a fast-track option. The state or county could make a decent amount of revenue by charging to move things along if a building met certain requirements. It's completely optional. "Mandatory" scares me.

Sooner would be better.

This should be going on now, there are people living in rentals that do not even meet the minimum standard codes!

Really, let's do better than 20% for old buildings and better than 50% for new. Aim higher, guys.

Let high cost of electricity be the incentive.

Impact fees for infrastructure and energy efficiency should not be tied together. They are two separate issues. I think the goals should be to reduce energy efficiency in EXISTING buildings 50% and NEW buildings 20%. New buildings are already soooooo much more energy efficient than older buildings that will have a very long life still.

There are model communities already using conservation practices in building materials, style, and renewable energy generation methods. We should study and adapt their methods.

This sounds like an important step forward towards reducing global warming/climate change, and it is concrete and do-able!

Now you're mixing generation issues with conservation issues ... make up your mind.

Raising the costs of construction for very small benefits.

How can item # 1 & 2 happen to an existing building which is currently efficient?

Help people add solar systems at a reasonable price.

Incentives are OK but not mandates. Need more research before setting hard targets for Montana.

same comment as above. Would this force Joe Homeowner to comply with all this too? That would place a huge financial burden on the working guy.

I would like to see the reduction of energy use 50% in new buildings by 2012 with 50% from renewable energy generation.

Who would carry the cost?

If the 25% residential and commercial improvements are focused on old building, this will be great, but it can be very wasteful to improve structures before it is necessary. Residential and commercial space should be improved as it is needed, don't just jump into renovations on buildings that are still structurally sound.

Good. Try for shorter time frame.

Introduce incentives for recycling or reusing building materials.

A small investment in existing structures now will create savings down the road.

While we approve of the use of incentives, this recommendation contains hard targets that will lead to increased costs to consumers.

No way. Energy efficient design should be left solely to the person paying market rates for energy sources. The cost tradeoff should be left to the consumer.

Can't it be done sooner than 2020??

Free market, not government interference.

I rather like the idea of having standards that one can meet and use for promotion purposes - rather a kin to the old "Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval." Every regulation that does not have direct impact on health or safety is a tax that impacts the poor and middle class the most, plus encourages less personal responsibility of the individual which becomes systemic.

I believe this proposal is very common-sense.

Why do we need to wait until 2020? By that time MT will be like Arizona! I think we can do better, especially in terms of new homes.

Just when I didn't think it could get any worse, it just did with this one. This even more ridiculous arbitrary proposal would devastate small business in Montana.

I would support incentives in the form of tax breaks

how about government eliminate rotundas again like the 70's

The more the better

One size does not fit all. Some earth homes are probably maximally efficient now; reducing by 20% might make them pretty dark or cold! Again, a laudable goal, but keep some flexibility!

I feel we need react to these ideas before 2020. I would think we could respond to them sooner. I feel five years should be our goal.

STATE NEEDS TO HELP RURAL AND SUBURBAN POOR IN THIS WITH MONEY WHICH WILL PAY BUILDERS AND LOCAL CARPENTERS TO DO THE WORK OR TOTALLY DESTROY STRUCTURE AND BUILD NEW EFFICIENT HOUSING AND COMMERCIAL SPACE,

reducing energy use in buildings is great but a mandate to utilize renewable works fine in some applications but in others the mandate may insure the least cost affective renewable integration occurs. As with many things the question of who pays is huge. If individuals have to pay to address their own inefficiency there is merit. If society has to pay the inefficient to become efficient with money that competes with education and other social needs it is bad public policy.

Absolutely necessary

I object to making people change what they already have. It may make what they are doing too expensive.

Incentives would be preferred over requirements

domestic credits are pathetic compared to other states

Im for improving incentives but creating taxes or "fee's" is bad thinking. this would be so much simpler if set by the state than each local entity

My father lives in one of the other western states. He has heated his house with solar for about 20 years now. His state gave him a tax credit that covered a huge chunk of the cost of installing the system. It has performed magnificently all these years

Should also improve energy costs during the life of the buildings

Leave it up to the builders and future owners. The Govt needs to stay out of it.

Laudable but perhaps not realistic goal.

I am definitely for energy-efficiency. But this should NOT be accomplished through incentives that raise our, the consumers', taxes.

See City of Portland, OR proposed energy conservation incentive/disincentive ordinance.

Same comment: I'd like to see this stronger, with higher percentages required sooner.

ABSOLUTELY UN-DOABLE FINANCIALLY OR OTHERWISE

Respondent does not have sufficient information or knowledge to rank this recommendation.

may be too subjective when dealing with existing structures

Incentives and education are good. Stay away from fees and mandates if you want this to gain traction.

The devil is in the details: suppose a small business, which just last month had to raise minimum wage for its employees, and is already operating with as much energy savings as it can squeeze out (, e.g., setting the ambient temp. at 62 degrees and has all florescent lighting)now has to take out windows or install a better furnace. Incentives must be paid in such a case.

Building "beyond" recognized building codes will only add cost to housing. This option is already available to those that want and can afford it. How do you intend to reduce energy use in existing buildings? Tax it? What if the homeowner is already conserving energy to the best of their ability, are they still expected to decrease their use by 20%?

this should include development of new building systems for this area such as on site material use. eg:compressed earth block (adobe) construction that takes into account thermal mass as part of building efficiency

there is climate change. But mans impact is limited. Maybe as little as less than 3-5% need cost benefit analysis

Incentives yes, Mandatory programs NO.

better, focus on commercial structures first.

Holcim supports the use of incentives as a means to induce improvements to energy- and resource-efficiency in buildings.

greater than 10% from renewable

Again it is too little and too slow.

no fees. coal will not be replaced emphasis needs to be directed to clean coal

Good, but not aggressive enough.

Encouragement of incentives instead of mandates is best

Incentives usually means more taxes. Why don't you just call this the enrgy efficiency tax.

incentives are fine as long as there is a cost benefit analysis appropriate for the incentive. An appropriate cost/benefit figure must be implemented.