Resolution on Residential Building Energy Codes

WHEREAS, Residential buildings account for about 20 percent of U.S. energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions, and consume about $120 billion of energy annually; *and*

WHEREAS, Approximately 1.5 million new U.S. homes are constructed annually; *and*

WHEREAS, Building codes are an accepted, essential, and cost-effective policy tool for ensuring energy efficiency in new homes, under the public service obligations to provide affordable, safe, and comfortable housing, and to limit the environmental impact of housing; *and*

WHEREAS, Restructuring of the energy utility industry obliges States to review and modernize their energy policies, including building energy codes; *and*

WHEREAS, Development of model residential energy codes is an important process for providing guidance to States and other adopting jurisdictions regarding their decisions to adopt and upgrade energy codes; *and*

WHEREAS, The code development and coordination processes of the International Code Council (ICC), which serves organizations of building officials such as the Council of American Building Officials (CABO), Building Officials and Code Administrators International (BOCA), International Conference of Building Officials (ICBO), and Southern Building Code Congress International (SBCCI), comprise the primary arena for the development of residential energy codes in the U.S.; *and*

WHEREAS, The ICC as of 1995 has assumed responsibility for development and maintenance of the CABO Model Energy Code (MEC) from CABO, and renamed it the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC); *and*

WHEREAS, The MEC is referenced in the Energy Policy Act of 1992 as the model States must review for energy codes, and the U.S. Department of Energy has worked with States to support MEC adoption since 1992; *and*

WHEREAS, 34 States have adopted either the 1995 MEC or codes that are at least as stringent; *and*

WHEREAS, The 1998 IECC includes an important change from the 1995 MEC that reduces electricity used for cooling, namely an efficiency standard for windows in cooling-dominated climate zones which can reduce energy use per new home by up to one-third in many regions; *and*

WHEREAS, Adopting the 1998 IECC is thus an especially effective policy response to the challenges of controlling peak electricity demand growth and greenhouse gas emissions; *now, therefore, be it*

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) convened at its 1999 Winter Meetings in Washington, D.C., recommends that state and local governments consider adoption of the 1998 IECC; *and be it further*

RESOLVED, That NARUC urges the ICC and States to ensure that any building codes developed or adopted in the U.S. contain energy efficiency provisions at least as stringent as those in the 1998 IECC.

Sponsored by the Committee on Energy Resources and Environment
Adopted February 24, 1999