



## IAFC POSITION PAPER

### Home Rule Code Adoption Authority for Fire and Life Safety Issues

*Submitted by the Fire & Life Safety Section Board of Directors*

The IAFC strongly believes that fire protection is best delivered by local officials using national model building codes with assistance from the state and federal government. We do not favor restrictions which would limit available resources for public safety. Just as local governments maintain control of planning and zoning issues within the community, the IAFC believes that codes and code enforcement are critical components for local governments in maintaining the safety, health and aesthetic value of their communities. Local officials should have the authority to exceed statewide minimum building and fire codes.

Amendments to model codes can have an impact on a community's Insurance Service Office, Inc. (ISO) Fire Protection Grading and Building Code Effectiveness Grading Ratings and reduced ratings can result in increased insurance costs to the public. Additionally, reductions in the minimum building and fire code provisions cause unnecessary death and injuries among the public and emergency responders.

The IAFC supports the adoption of statewide minimum codes, as this would ensure those jurisdictions without life safety improvements will have a minimum acceptable standard. Furthermore, the IAFC supports the ability of local governments to enhance the level of fire and life safety in their own jurisdictions based on local conditions. Recent state legislation does the exact opposite by prohibiting local jurisdictions from enhancing fire and life safety provisions in adopted building and fire codes. This causes great concern to IAFC members and is detrimental to the mission of the IAFC membership to protect emergency responders and the public we serve.

The IAFC encourages fire service leaders to be aggressive in their opposition to legislative attempts in their states to amend out fire and life safety features or to propose language that limits a community's ability to enhance fire and life safety requirements. The fire service should be actively engaged in the effort to educate state legislators, thus ensuring that these legislators fully comprehend the implications of the actions they take and how they impact the safety of the public and the emergency responders in their own communities.

**SUBMITTED: April 13, 2010**

**ADOPTED BY IAFC Board of Directors on: April 30, 2010**