



**Testimony submitted to the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy
In support of H.2865/S.1935 – An act to establish a net zero stretch energy code
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The League of Women Voters has a long history of championing efforts to ensure clean air, clean water, and a resilient ecosphere as key to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public and society. We are temporary beneficiaries of this planet, and the growing threat of climate change should make us all acutely aware of our responsibility to protect it for future generations as well as our own.

We are in a climate emergency. The need to address climate change is more urgent with each passing day. There is scientific consensus that we need to reduce emissions quickly and drastically to avert the worst impacts of climate disruption. In New England, the largest source of emissions is the transportation sector at 43%. The building sector is a close second, responsible for approximately 40% of emissions.

H.2865/S.1935, An Act to establish a net zero stretch energy code, is a straightforward bill that will help align the building sector with the need to reduce emissions by updating the stretch code. Stretch codes convey expectations and signal the way of the future. Stretch codes are designed to replace the base code as the construction industry strives to meet new standards. For this reason, the current stretch code no longer represents a significant improvement over the base code and has essentially become the norm. Stretch codes are popular. Adoption of the stretch code is a requirement for Green Communities status, and over two-thirds of Massachusetts communities have adopted it. People want energy efficiency as a sure-fire means of reducing energy costs. H.2865/S.1935 provides a phase-in period for existing Green Communities while ushering in a new code for new construction.

In addition to more efficient building construction, a net zero stretch code will mean highly efficient, well-insulated buildings that derive all of their energy from renewable energy produced on site or from local sources. This in turn will stimulate the local, renewable energy industry, adding new businesses and jobs to our economy along with a cleaner, safer, and healthier environment and greater energy independence. All this comes at less cost to families as a result of lower energy usage resulting from higher energy efficiency and insulation.

An Act to establish a net zero stretch energy code is a significant and important bill, particularly if we are serious about responding to climate change and the needs of families and the economy.

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts urges you to move H.2865/S.1935 out of committee and to the floor for a vote this legislative session – for consumers, for our Commonwealth and for the common good.

Thank you for your consideration.