

## INDIANA BUILDERS ASSOCIATION

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### **HIGHLIGHTS/NEWS**

#### **CONTACT FEDERAL LAWMAKERS TO ENACT THE EMERGENCY FINANCIAL RESCUE PLAN TODAY**

During its board of directors meeting in San Diego, the leadership of NAHB unanimously called on Congress to act now before conditions deteriorate to a point that could trigger a global financial meltdown. Please contact your Congressional delegation and urge them to act promptly on the financial markets rescue plan. It is hoped this rescue plan will shore up housing finance markets and help stem the decline in housing demand and home values by providing an outlet and market for troubled mortgage assets. This can free up capital for housing, as well as other important sectors of the economy. Call Congress toll free at 1-866-924-NAHB (6242).

#### **FIRE OFFICIAL SURGE SWEEPS SPRINKLER MANDATE TO VICTORY**

Fire sprinkler mandates will be part of the 2009 International Residential Code and will be required in all one- and two-family homes and townhouses that build to the code as of Jan. 1, 2011. The sudden –and controversial –arrival on Saturday of 900 fire officials eligible to vote at the International Code Council’s final action hearings in Minneapolis swelled the number of sprinkler proponents and the measure was approved by a vote of 1,283 to 470 on Sunday morning. NAHB had identified several concerns over residential fire sprinkler systems –among them, questioning whether most home owners were prepared to perform the maintenance required to ensure that the sprinklers remain operational. Indiana builds to the International Residential Code with Indiana amendments so the provision could be struck by amendment and will not automatically be placed into the state’s building code.

#### **STATE DISASTER ASSISTANCE CENTERS OPEN**

Governor Mitch Daniels announced that the state will partner with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Red Cross to open three one-stop disaster assistance centers in Lake County this week to help residents of Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties impacted by severe weather caused by Hurricane Ike. The state also plans to open a site in LaPorte County as well as Porter County. President George Bush declared that a major disaster exists for the three counties and approved federal individual assistance for affected residents. All centers will have representatives from FEMA, and computers and phones will be available for flood victims to complete (FEMA) applications. Residents and business owners who sustained losses in the three counties can register online at <http://www.fema.gov/assistance> or call (800) 621-3362. FEMA assistance can include grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses, and other programs to help individuals and business owners recover from the effects of the disaster.

## **LEGISLATIVE**

### **NOT REGISTERED TO VOTE? REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS APPROACHING**

The voter registration deadline is October 6, 2008 so be sure to register or update your registration if needed. It is imperative that you participate and cast your vote for those candidates who share your views on important housing issues. More than 597,000 Hoosiers have registered or updated their voter registrations this year alone. Visit [http://www.in.gov/sos/elections/pdfs/VRG7\\_080108\\_revision.pdf](http://www.in.gov/sos/elections/pdfs/VRG7_080108_revision.pdf) to register or update your registration today.

### **TWO GUBERNATORIAL DEBATES DOWN, ONE TO GO**

Governor Mitch Daniels, Jill Long Thompson, and Andy Horning squared off at the second of three debates this week in Jasper. The debate allowed citizens to ask questions and hear direct responses to important issues. The third, and final, debate is scheduled for October 14<sup>th</sup> in Bloomington. To view previous debates, visit <http://www.indianadebatecommission.com/index.htm>.

### **UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE TRUST FUND WORKGROUP MEETS**

Indiana Builders Association lobbyists have been working with several legislators, administration officials, and various employer/employee representatives to determine the best course of action on keeping the Trust Fund solvent. The Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund will need an infusion of cash in 2009 in order to continue paying claims to Hoosier residents. The working group is looking at the cost of all options and IBA will continue to work with interested parties to insure a balanced program is debated in the upcoming session of the Indiana General Assembly.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATIVE STUDY COMMITTEE DISCUSSES GREEN BUILDING**

The Environmental Quality Services Committee recently met to discuss green buildings and the possibility of providing an incentive vs. mandating its use. IBA testified about the upcoming National Green Building Standard, provided examples of incentives for commercial and residential buildings other states have implemented and provided information that explained why IBA remains opposed to mandates in this area. The committee will further determine if they wish to make recommendations which may translate into legislation during the upcoming session.

### **COMMISSION ON COURTS TO DISCUSS CREATION OF STATEWIDE REGISTRY**

The legislative study committee, Commission on Courts, will meet next week to discuss the possibility of creating a statewide registry for residential mechanic's liens. Unlike language drafted last session, a new draft leaves current Indiana law intact but would require the use of an online registry to file and release residential mechanic's liens. IBA's mechanic's lien task force has reviewed draft language and made the decision to support the idea during summer study committee. IBA staff and several attorneys will be on-hand at the committee hearing to address the issue as well as answer questions from committee members.

## **NAHB NEWS**

### **HOUSING STARTS DECLINE FURTHER IN AUGUST**

Housing starts declined 2% in August to an annual pace of 895,000 units as home builders continued to slow new construction in order to pare down their unsold inventories and help pave the way for a cyclical recovery in the home building industry, according to figures recently released by the U.S. Commerce Department. NAHB continues to project a stabilization of new-home sales in the final quarter of 2008, which should, in turn, allow production to begin a slow and steady recovery by the second quarter of 2009.

### **COALITION CALLS FOR EXTENDING ENERGY TAX INCENTIVES**

NAHB Executive Vice President and CEO Jerry Howard joined leaders from environmental and renewable energy advocacy groups to call on Congress to extend the energy tax credit programs that expire at the end of this year. Howard emphasized the importance of extending the so-called “45L” provision, which gives home builders a tax credit of \$2,000 per home when specific energy efficient measures are included.