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Sierra Club Applauds Houston Adopting Solar-Ready Building Energy Code

Austin, TX - On Wednesday, Houston advanced its leadership in clean energy by adopting the latest building energy code for new residential construction with a special provision for solar power. In a unanimous vote, Houston City Council adopted the 2015 International Energy Conservation Code, ensuring that new residential buildings will comply with state minimum requirements for new construction. It also became the state's first major city to require that new homes be built so that future owners can easily add solar panels if they so choose.

The so-called "solar ready" provision to the new building code means that the roofs of new homes will have the right conditions to add solar panels, and there will be adequate space inside the home to add electrical control equipment for solar panels.

Houston is expected to take up a similar change to its commercial energy code in October.

In response, **Cyrus Reed, Conservation Director of the Sierra Club's Lone Star Chapter**, issues the following statement:

"The Sierra Club applauds Mayor Turner and Houston City Council for adopting such a forward-thinking code. We hope many other cities across Texas follow Houston's lead in adopting up to date building codes that make it easy for homeowners to add solar power if they choose.

"New homes in Houston will be more energy efficient, saving families an average of 16 percent compared to homes built to the 2009 code. On average, a Houston family in a new home should save about \$100 per year on utility costs over any increase on construction and mortgage payments. In addition, these homes should be more water and gas-efficient as well. Adoption and enforcement of current codes will also help the city maintain a good ISO rating and keep insurance rates low for its citizens.

"We also thank the Houston's Code Development Team, which included Sierra Club leaders, homebuilders, architects, and other interested parties in the development of local codes."

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