

HB 2423 A -A5 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Business and General Government

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Meeting Dates: 5/7, 5/9

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Adopts Small Home Specialty Code for construction of home no more than 400 square feet in size. Requires Department of Consumer and Business Services to amend Low-Rise Residential Dwelling Code to ensure Small Home Specialty Code supercedes any conflicting provisions of Low-Rise Residential Dwelling Code. Specifies design calculation for fire sprinkler system shall consider maximum of two sprinklers and that small home be considered a single compartment. Requires small home to have heat or smoke alarm. Sunsets Small Home Specialty Code on January 1, 2026. Takes effect October 1, 2019.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- History and process for developing Small Home Specialty Code
- Benefits of small homes
- Need for technical amendments

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-A5 Deletes provisions related to adoption of Small Home Specialty Code (SHSC). Adopts 2018 International Residential Code with Appendix Q as Small Home Specialty Code. Prohibits Director of Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS) from amending small home specialty code. Requires small home to include photoelectric smoke alarm. Adopts standards for residential fire sprinkler system. Allows local building official to allow increased detection and alarms in lieu of fire sprinkler system, and to alter, modify, or waive any specialty code requirement when strict adherence to SHSC is impractical or infeasible. Requires that building and zoning permits for designate small home is single family project and certificate of occupancy allow only for residential use as single family dwelling.

BACKGROUND:

In response to a rise in consumer demand for low-cost or minimally-sized housing, the 2018 International Residential Code (IRC) includes Appendix Q, which allows permanently-sited homes up to 400 square feet to contain sleeping lofts accessed by ladders. Current statute requires the Department of Consumer and Business Services to adopt construction standards for homes not more than 600 square feet, including provisions allowing for sleeping lofts accessed by a ladder or alternating tread device. The Oregon Residential Specialty Code (ORSC) allows any home to contain a sleeping loft accessed by a ladder or alternating tread device, as long as the structure includes certain fire and life safety provisions including residential fire sprinklers.

House Bill 2423-A adopts Appendix Q of the 2018 IRC as the Small Home Specialty Code applicable to construction of homes no more than 400 square feet in size and clarifies the calculation of fire sprinkler systems to avoid triggering a larger water line, which could incur additional system development charges. The measure sunsets the Small Home Specialty Code on January 1, 2026.