



Testimony in Opposition to SB 4061

To: Honorable Members of the Senate Executive Committee

From: Joe McCoy, Executive Director, ISACo

Date: April 22, 2026

Subject: Opposition to Senate Bill 4061

Chairperson Castro and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Illinois State Association of Counties (ISACo), I respectfully submit this testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 4061 as it relates to provisions impacting county authority over building standards, specifically the authorization of single-stair residential construction.

SB 4061 would amend the Illinois Counties Code to establish a statewide building standard allowing residential buildings of up to six stories to be constructed with a single stairway, provided certain safety features are included. While ISACo recognizes the importance of addressing housing supply and affordability challenges across Illinois, counties have significant concerns with the bill's preemption of local authority over building and zoning standards in unincorporated areas.

Counties have long exercised responsibility for adopting and enforcing building and safety codes that reflect local conditions, infrastructure capacity, and public safety needs. SB 4061 would prohibit counties from enforcing standards that require more than one stairway for buildings of this height, thereby removing local discretion to apply standards that are responsive to community-specific considerations. This represents a substantial shift away from local control and undermines the ability of counties to ensure development aligns with local safety expectations and planning priorities.

Additionally, the proposed single-stair standard does not align with the 2021 International Building Code (IBC), which continues to require two stairways for residential buildings of this scale. Departing from these nationally recognized standards through state preemption raises legitimate concerns regarding building safety, emergency egress, and the ability of counties to maintain consistent and proven code frameworks.

For these reasons, ISACo respectfully opposes SB 4061 as currently drafted. At a minimum, we urge the Committee to remove or amend the provisions that preempt county authority over stairway requirements and instead allow counties to retain discretion in applying building safety standards.

ISACo remains committed to working collaboratively with the General Assembly and stakeholders to address housing challenges in a manner that preserves public safety and respects the role of counties in local land use and development decisions.

Thank you for your consideration and work on behalf of the residents of Illinois.