



National Ready Mixed Concrete Association

Save Lives with Safe Rooms Model State Legislation

Over the past few decades, there has been an exponential increase in human and material losses from disaster events. While the scientific community debates the frequency of these extreme hazards, the rise in disasters and their consequences are certainly related to a rise in people's vulnerability. Images of buildings washed away, children exposed to extreme temperatures, and survivors digging through the wreckage, illustrates the need to rethink our building practices. However, despite increases in natural disasters few states have adopted more stringent requirements in building standards. NRMCA continues to be concerned with the impact of severe weather and hazard event preparedness throughout North America.

To that end, and based on the National Institute of Science and Technology (NIST) studies, changes have been adopted in the national model codes requiring community safe rooms for new school buildings and facilities associated with schools where people regularly assemble. However, this is not enough. The devastating storms and tornadoes that have ripped through Arkansas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas have resulted in a tragic loss of human lives and have caused millions of dollars in property damage. Enhanced protection for the nation's most tornado-prone regions should also apply. As part of efforts to improve the resiliency of structures, NRMCA is encouraging States to consider the inclusion of safe rooms in any new state funded structures that are located in areas prone to severe weather and/or other hazards.

A safe room is a windowless, accessible room designed and constructed to resist the impact of debris during tornadoes, hurricanes, or other extreme hazard events and located out of an area susceptible to flooding or other after affects of an event.

About NRMCA

Founded in 1930, the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association is the leading industry advocate. Our mission is to provide exceptional value for our members by responsibly representing and serving the entire ready mixed concrete industry through leadership, promotion, education, and partnering to ensure ready mixed concrete is the building material of choice. The proposed legislation below could be used by NRMCA State Affiliates, NRMCA members, or others stakeholders in safe room construction.

For additional information visit www.nrmca.org or contact Dr. Julian Mills-Beale, Director, Codes and Standards, at 484-633-7452 or jmills-beale@nrmca.org.

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Saving Lives with Safe Rooms Act of _____

To require the Administrator of the State Emergency Management Agency to prescribe regulations to require States and localities to build a safe room in a State funded construction project, and for other purposes.

A BILL

To require the Administrator of the State Emergency Management Agency to require States and localities to build a safe room in a state funded construction project, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the _____ that safe rooms will decrease public shelter requirements during hazard conditions in the future.

SECTION 1. SAFE ROOM SAVES LIVES

This Act may be cited as the “Saving Lives with Safe Rooms Act of _____”.

SEC. 2. REGULATIONS TO REQUIRE STATES AND LOCALITIES TO BUILD A SAFE ROOM IN STATE FUNDED CONSTRUCTION.

(a) REGULATIONS REQUIRED- In the case of the construction of a public building (including those used for educational, recreational, governmental, or cultural purposes), States and localities shall build in the construction a safe room that shall–

(1) be of a size sufficient to accommodate, at a single time, all occupants of the structure in which the safe room is located, if the construction or improvement uses State funds; and

(2) comply with local building codes and standards for construction and safety as prescribed in [FEMA P-361, Safe Rooms for Tornadoes and Hurricanes \(2021\)](#) and;

(3) [FEMA P-320, Taking Shelter from the Storm - Building or Installing a Safe Room for Your Home \(2021\)](#).

(b) DEFINITIONS

(1) SAFE ROOM- The term “safe room” means a windowless, accessible room designed to resist the impact of debris during tornadoes, hurricanes, or other extreme hazard events and located out of an area susceptible to flooding or other after affects of an event.

(2) CONSTRUCTION- The term “construction” includes new construction, reconstruction, and/or rehabilitation and improvement.