

OFFERED BY COUNCILOR EDWARD M. FLYNN



CITY OF BOSTON

IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY SIX

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A TEMPORARY ROLLBACK FOR THE BUILDING EMISSIONS REDUCTION AND DISCLOSURE ORDINANCE (BERDO) AND STRETCH ENERGY CODES FOR FIVE YEARS

WHEREAS, With reports continuing to show that housing production has dropped significantly in Boston in recent years - from 9,800 units approved in 2020, to 2,389 approved in 2024, and just 852 units in the first half of 2025 - all options should now be on the table to increase supply and meet demand. A Boston Globe report also indicated that Boston lagged 16 peer cities in production in 2024; *and*

WHEREAS, The Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance (BERDO) is a City of Boston ordinance that requires large buildings to report their annual energy and water use and establishes greenhouse gas emissions standards aimed at reducing carbon pollution from the building sector; *and*

WHEREAS, BERDO is a component of the Boston Climate Action Plan and is intended to help Boston meet its citywide goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 by requiring certain large buildings to gradually reduce emissions or comply through approved alternative measures; *and*

WHEREAS, Residential buildings with 35 or more units are subject to emissions compliance in 2025, while residential buildings with 15-34 units will be subject to emissions compliance in 2030. 35,000+ square foot non-residential buildings are subject to emissions compliance in 2025, while non-residential buildings between 20,000 and 34,999 square feet will be subject to emissions compliance in 2030; *and*

WHEREAS, BERDO requires annual reporting, third-party verification of such reporting, and reduction in total annual emissions. The city enforces compliance with daily fees. Both residential and non-residential buildings over 35,000 square feet that are deemed in violation of BERDO are fined \$300 per day, or \$109,500 per year; *and*

WHEREAS, Additionally, the Stretch Energy Code is a stricter version of the typical building code, which requires new buildings and major renovations to be more energy efficient than the basic state minimum. Boston adopted the Stretch Energy Building Code in 2023, which requires developers to use heat pumps instead of gas furnaces, energy efficient ventilation systems, stronger insulation, and

contract third-party consultants to test efficiency. Residents and developers have also noted that electricity bills are already difficult to manage - retrofitting homes to be electric is expensive for working families; *and*

WHEREAS, Currently, the alternative compliance payment stands at \$234 per metric ton of CO₂. During these challenging economic times, it's also critical that the BERDO Review Board conducts a thorough review of this metric, in careful consideration of the current economic climate; *and*

WHEREAS, During this time of great economic uncertainty - a high interest rate environment for several years to stem post-pandemic inflation, increased construction costs, and tariffs - Boston must use all tools available to address the housing crisis and economic development; ***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT***

RESOLVED: That the Boston City Council supports the City of Boston to temporarily suspend BERDO regulations and the Stretch Energy Code for the next 5 years.

Filed on: March 11, 2026