

# ABC Wisconsin: Sponsorship of Roth / Rodriguez commercial building plan reform legislation

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Most commercial building plans need to be reviewed and approved by the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Service (DSPS) before construction begins. A backlog that predates the Evers administration still exists and will only get worse as the economy recovers. As a result, building projects and the related well-paying construction jobs, economic development, and tax dollars are unnecessarily delayed by a bureaucratic process— sometimes up to a year depending on Wisconsin's building season and weather.

DSPS's Commercial Building Code Council and Plumbing Code Advisory Committee could have been the venue to address the backlog. Both were briefed on the problem and potential solutions in January 2020, and neither has developed any proposal in the intervening 13 months. The slowly but surely restarting Wisconsin economy cannot wait another year. Legislation is needed to be signed into law before spring construction begins.

Under this legislation, here is a short list of the buildings that would still have their commercial plans reviewed by DSPS: every health care facility, every school, every childcare facility, every apartment, every factory, every church, every concert venue, every building larger than 200,000 cubic feet or more than one story. In addition, all sprinkler systems, and plumbing plans with more than 25 fixtures would also still be reviewed by DSPS.

Building plans exempt from DSPS commercial plan review under this legislation would still need to be approved by a Wisconsin licensed architect, engineer, or designer. Plumbing plans of 25 fixtures or fewer would still need to be approved by

a Wisconsin licensed master plumber. Currently, plumbing plans with 15 or fewer fixtures are not reviewed by DSPS.

The result of this legislation will be that DSPS focuses its attention on reviewing less-routine building plans, while more routine plans will be reviewed by licensed subject matter experts.

**The deadline is this coming Friday, February 19.** Please contact Senator Roth or Rep. Rodriguez and sign onto LRB-0655.