

# Orlando Sentinel



**LETTER: Build strong, Florida**  
**By Robert Garbini**  
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For families living along the coastline in the Gulf and Southeast Atlantic states, and scattered throughout the Caribbean islands, 2017 has been a year they would rather forget.

When it's all said and done, the 2017 Atlantic hurricane season may go down as the costliest ever. Yet, if it were not for the lessons learned from Hurricane Andrew 25 years ago, the devastation may have been significantly worse. In the immediate aftermath of Andrew, Florida adopted statewide building codes and implemented more-stringent enforcement requirements, which improved the community's security, and led to cost savings in repairs.

Despite this, the [Florida Legislature](#), at the behest of groups like the home builders, passed a law in June that allowed Florida's code to break from international standards — effectively weakening the building code.

There's evidence that building with less resilient materials costs more in the long run. Whether the issue is stability in the face of high winds, or rotting and molding after floodwaters, the materials used to build make a difference.

In order to ensure the homes and buildings Floridians construct in the years ahead are capable of standing up to the worst Mother Nature can deliver, a strong building code is required. Every effort to protect the structures from South Beach to the Panhandle must be made. That means keeping a strong building code intact.

As they say, the best offense is a strong defense.

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