Proposed amendment submitted by:

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Date: 17 May 2021
Company/Organization: Building Code Review Board, NEC Subcommittee
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Applicable code:  Applicable code section:

Current language (including section numbers and include prior adopted amendments):

440.14 Location. Disconnecting means shall be located within sight from, and readily accessible from the air-conditioning or refrigerating equipment. The disconnecting means shall be permitted to be installed on or within the air-conditioning or refrigerating equipment.

The disconnecting means shall not be located on panels that are designed to allow access to the air-conditioning or refrigeration equipment or to obscure the equipment nameplate(s).

Exception No. 1: Where the disconnecting means provided in accordance with 430.102(A) is lockable in accordance with 110.25 and the refrigerating or air-conditioning equipment is essential to an industrial process in a facility with written safety procedures, and where the conditions of maintenance and supervision ensure that only qualified persons service the equipment, a disconnecting means within sight from the equipment shall not be required.

Exception No. 2: Where an attachment plug and receptacle serve as the disconnecting means in accordance with 440.13, their location shall be accessible but shall not be required to be readily accessible

Check one:   ___ Delete without substitution:   X   Add new section to read as follows:
___ Delete section and substitute the following:   ___ Revise section to read as follows:
Show Line through material to be deleted.   Underline material to be added.

Proposed code language:

Exception no. 3: The disconnect for an indoor unit of a ductless mini-split system shall not be required if the disconnect for the outdoor condensing unit that feeds the indoor unit is lockable in the open position in accordance with 110.25.
Reason / Justification:
When Article 440.14 was written the ductless mini-split system was not taken into consideration because it was not common to the industry. The requirements for a disconnect in section 440.14 are for a service disconnect and not an emergency switch. The technicians that service these units do not use this disconnect because turning off this disconnect will send an error code and shut down the entire system, therefore the disconnect at the outdoor unit is used. The new exception that is proposed requires the disconnect to be able to be locked per the requirements of section 110.25 so the unit can be serviced safely. Requiring a disconnect at the head units of heat pumps adds to the cost/affordability of the installation for NH residents. More importantly, now that these systems are also being used the sole heating system in dwellings units, it causes no heat calls in the middle of the winter.

Financial Analysis/Fiscal Impact of proposed amendment:
A cost savings of approximately $200 per head unit.

For Building Code Review Board Use:
Not approved: ______ Approved: ________ Approved with modifications: _____
Scheduled Hearing Date: ___________________ Exhibit #: ________________
Chair’s Signature: ___________________________ Date: __________
Printed Name: _____________________________