

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5450

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Local Government, January 30, 2018

Title: An act relating to use of cross-laminated timber for building construction.

Brief Description: Concerning the use of cross-laminated timber for building construction.

Sponsors: Senators Liias, Warnick, Ranker, Fain, Miloscia, Zeiger, Wilson, McCoy, Chase, Mullet and Frockt.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Local Government: 1/31/17, 2/02/17, 1/30/18 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the State Building Code Council to adopt rules for the use of cross-laminated timber (CLT) products for building construction.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Takko, Chair; Short, Ranking Member; Angel and Liias.

Staff: Bonnie Kim (786-7316)

Background: CLT Products. CLT is a wood panel consisting of three, five, or seven layers of dimensional lumber oriented at right angles to one another and then glued to form structural panels. Because of the strength and stability of CLT, it is increasingly used as an alternative for traditional structural materials, e.g., steel, concrete, and masonry.

State Building Code. The State Building Code (Code) establishes minimum performance standards and requirements for construction and construction materials in the state, consistent with accepted standards of engineering, fire, and life safety. The Code comprises a number of model codes and standards, developed and published by international and national organizations, which are adopted by reference in the State Building Code Act (Act). Model codes and standards adopted in the Act include the International Building Code, the International Residential Code, and the Uniform Plumbing Code Standards.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The State Building Code Council (Council) is responsible for adopting, amending, and maintaining the model codes and standards adopted by reference in the Act. Amendments to the model codes and standards adopted by the Council are codified in the Washington Administrative Code. The Council reviews updated editions of each model code and standard every three years. The Council may employ permanent and temporary staff and contract for services. The Department of Enterprise Services provides administrative and clerical assistance to the Council.

Summary of Bill: CLT products are defined as panels consisting of several layers of lumber boards stacked crosswise and glued or otherwise attached together.

The Council must, in consideration of national and international standards, adopt rules for the use of CLT products for residential and commercial building construction.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: *Testimony from 2017 Regular Session.* PRO: There is a lot of interest in using this new technology across the state. The building code does not currently provide for the use of CLT. CLT performs well in acoustic, seismic, and fire conditions. CLT supports affordable housing in urban areas while also supporting rural economies by using small-diameter wood. We have been working to understand the barriers to using CLT. The International Code Council (ICC) will be releasing model code language for the use of wood products in tall buildings next spring or fall.

CON: The ICC has formed an ad hoc committee on tall wood buildings to investigate and report on the use of CLT. Seattle is participating in this comprehensive process. The ICC Board recommendations may result in code revisions in the next couple of years. This bill would be out of sync and duplicate efforts happening nationally. On the national level, there has been a lot of testimony against tall wood buildings because full scale fire tests have not been done. This bill would put constituent lives at risk and cause environmental damage. This bill creates an unequal playing field for building materials in favor of CLT. CLT is not a sustainable material and does not last as long as traditional building materials. This bill is premature because of current ICC processes.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Leda Chahim, Forterra.

CON: Mike Wood, Ash Grove Cement Company; Tien Peng, National Ready Mix Concrete Association; Bruce Chattin, Washington Aggregates & Concrete Association; Michael Transue, citizen.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.