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VOTE NO ON ICC PROPOSAL G108

Proposal to Allow up to 18 story Mass Timber Buildings Is Public Safety Threat

Multi-story mass timber buildings being considered by the International Code Council (ICC) will present a threat to health and safety. The ICC code change proposal, G108, should be declined because tall wood is:

UNTESTED, UNPROVEN AND UNSOUND

UNTESTED: Wood-industry funded tests performed in the U.S. and Canada were completely inadequate, failing to examine real-world structural risk factors, potential firefighting safety impacts and other important risk factors to public health and safety.

- No exterior fire testing was performed.
- The limited testing done was irrelevant to the proposed code changes to increase allowable mass timber building height to 18 stories.
- No tests were done to factor in wind, which impacts fire-fighting and property damage.
- Fire tests did not factor in heavy loads from upper stories, nor did they examine firefighting impacts from contents of storage or mercantile buildings.
- Fire sealants and connections were not installed correctly, thus highlighting the problem with understanding the dangers of such mass timber structures.

UNPROVEN: While non-combustible concrete and steel have been used for centuries in tall buildings and structures, mass timber products, like cross-laminated timber (CLT), are unknown and unproven construction materials.

- Only mass timber producers have information about how their products perform and connects with other building materials, including dry wall, steel and concrete.
- Contractors and code officials have no experience in inspecting mass timber buildings, thus raising potential structural and fire risks.
- The adhesives used in mass timber products have not been standardized, further raising risks associated with fire and structural performance.
- It is unclear how mass timber products perform with water damage from fire response efforts, heavy rain and floods or natural disasters.

UN SOUND: [The majority of Americans, or 74 percent, believe](#) that tall wood buildings are high-risk and dangerous to public health and safety, particularly threats associated with natural and man-made disasters like hurricanes and wildfires.

- Tall wood buildings would be taller than the vast majority of firefighting equipment – raising life safety and property damage risk exponentially.
- Potential uses for tall wood structures, such as dorms or assisted-living facilities, would put the most vulnerable Americans in harm's way.

[Attend public hearings October 24-31 in Richmond, Va.](#)