


Senator Jesse Bjorkman
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MEMORANDUM

Date: April 13, 2023
To: Senator Donald Olson, Co-Chairman
Senator Bert Stedman, Co-Chairman
Senator Lyman Hoffman, Co-Chairman
From: Senator Jesse Bjorkman 
RE: Response to Committee Question on SB 87

Senator Kiehl asked what the height restriction would be for residential structures using locally graded lumber and is it reasonable to think that the height of the structure is related to risk?

The local lumber grading program proposed in Senate Bill 87 does not specify a height restriction, however there are other statutory limitations that would have the practical effect of limiting the height of residential construction using locally graded lumber.

Stamped, graded lumber has been selectively tested by the Underwriters Laboratory for seismic resilience, which is an issue of great importance in Alaska construction. In a recent visit from representatives of Alaska's architecture industry, I was advised that an engineer or architect would not approve the use of locally graded lumber for the designs that require a professional stamp under AS 08.48.331(6) because it has not undergone seismic testing. This statute exempts from the design stamp requirement residential structures that are either a four dwelling, two story building or a two dwelling, three story building. Residential structures that exceed these limitations would require a professional design stamp and thus would not use locally graded lumber.