

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 538

To clarify research and development for wood products, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 7, 2017

Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. CRAPO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. RISCH, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. WICKER, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. DAINES, Mr. KING, Mr. PETERS, and Mr. TESTER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

A BILL

To clarify research and development for wood products, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Timber Innovation Act
5 of 2017”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

8 (1) INNOVATIVE WOOD PRODUCT.—The term
9 “innovative wood product” means a type of building

1 component or system that uses large panelized wood
 2 construction, including mass timber.

3 (2) MASS TIMBER.—The term “mass timber”
 4 includes—

5 (A) cross-laminated timber;

6 (B) nail laminated timber;

7 (C) glue laminated timber;

8 (D) laminated strand lumber; and

9 (E) laminated veneer lumber.

10 (3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
 11 the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Re-
 12 search and Development deputy area and the State
 13 and Private Forestry deputy area of the Forest
 14 Service.

15 (4) TALL WOOD BUILDING.—The term “tall
 16 wood building” means a building designed to be—

17 (A) constructed with mass timber; and

18 (B) more than 85 feet in height.

19 **SEC. 3. CLARIFICATION OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT**
 20 **PROGRAM FOR WOOD BUILDING CONSTRUC-**
 21 **TION.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall conduct per-
 23 formance-driven research and development, education, and
 24 technical assistance for the purpose of facilitating the use

1 of innovative wood products in wood building construction
2 in the United States.

3 (b) ACTIVITIES.—In carrying out subsection (a), the
4 Secretary shall—

5 (1) after receipt of input and guidance from,
6 and collaboration with, the wood products industry,
7 conservation organizations, and institutions of high-
8 er education, conduct research and development,
9 education, and technical assistance at the Forest
10 Products Laboratory or through the State and Pri-
11 vate Forestry deputy area that meets measurable
12 performance goals for the achievement of the prior-
13 ities described in subsection (c); and

14 (2) after coordination and collaboration with
15 the wood products industry and conservation organi-
16 zations, make competitive grants to institutions of
17 higher education to conduct research and develop-
18 ment, education, and technical assistance that meets
19 measurable performance goals for the achievement
20 of the priorities described in subsection (c).

21 (c) PRIORITIES.—The research and development,
22 education, and technical assistance conducted under sub-
23 section (a) shall give priority to—

24 (1) ways to improve the commercialization of
25 innovative wood products;

1 (2) analyzing the safety of tall wood building
2 materials;

3 (3) calculations by the Forest Products Labora-
4 tory of the life cycle environmental footprint, from
5 extraction of raw materials through the manufac-
6 turing process, of tall wood building construction;

7 (4) analyzing methods to reduce the life cycle
8 environmental footprint of tall wood building con-
9 struction;

10 (5) analyzing the potential implications of the
11 use of innovative wood products in building con-
12 struction on wildlife; and

13 (6) one or more other research areas identified
14 by the Secretary, in consultation with conservation
15 organizations, institutions of higher education, and
16 the wood products industry.

17 (d) TIMEFRAME.—To the maximum extent prac-
18 ticable, the measurable performance goals for the research
19 and development, education, and technical assistance con-
20 ducted under subsection (a) shall be achievable within a
21 5-year timeframe.

22 **SEC. 4. TALL WOOD BUILDING COMPETITION.**

23 Subject to availability of appropriations, not less fre-
24 quently than once during each fiscal year for the period
25 of fiscal years 2017 through 2021, the Secretary shall

1 carry out a competition for a tall wood building design,
 2 or other innovative wood product demonstration, in ac-
 3 cordance with section 24 of the Stevenson-Wydler Tech-
 4 nology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3719).

5 **SEC. 5. WOOD INNOVATION GRANT PROGRAM.**

6 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

7 (1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
 8 ty” means—

9 (A) an individual;

10 (B) a public or private entity (including a
 11 center of excellence that consists of one or more
 12 partnerships between forestry, engineering, ar-
 13 chitecture, or business schools at one or more
 14 institutions of higher education); or

15 (C) a State, local, or tribal government.

16 (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
 17 the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the
 18 Chief of the Forest Service.

19 (b) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary, in car-
 20 rying out the wood innovation grant program of the Sec-
 21 retary described in the notice of the Secretary entitled
 22 “Request for Proposals: 2016 Wood Innovations Funding
 23 Opportunity” (80 Fed. Reg. 63498 (October 20, 2015)),
 24 may make a wood innovation grant to one or more eligible

1 entities each year for the purpose of advancing the use
2 of innovative wood products.

3 (c) INCENTIVIZING USE OF EXISTING MILLING CA-
4 PACITY.—In selecting among proposals of eligible entities
5 under subsection (b), the Secretary shall give priority to
6 proposals that include the use or retrofitting (or both) of
7 existing sawmill facilities located in counties in which the
8 average annual unemployment rate exceeded the national
9 average unemployment rate by more than 1 percent in the
10 previous calendar year.

11 (d) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—As a condition of re-
12 ceiving a grant under subsection (b), an eligible entity
13 shall provide funds equal to the amount the eligible entity
14 receives under the grant, to be derived from non-Federal
15 sources.

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