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State Fire Marshals Stand for Strong Buildings and Safe Materials

NASFM opposes ICC 2021 proposals weakening safety precautions for tall wood buildings

Silver Spring, MD – Build with Strength applauds the National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM) for publicly opposing significant changes in the ICC 2021 Code Proposals that would [loosen safety requirements for tall wood buildings](#). The proposed changes would increase height, area, and story requirements for tall wood buildings based in part on “professional judgment.” The State Fire Marshals have called for data supporting decisions related to code changes.

“The current proposals go too far, too fast, in an area of significant and long-lasting importance,” said the position statement. “No live fire testing has been conducted in buildings constructed to the limits being proposed, and the limited application of external influences to fire behavior. It is extremely difficult to accept that these proposals meet the committee’s own stated objectives. We are left with ‘professional judgment’ as the only substantiation.”

NASFM also took issue with limited testing and research related to these code changes.

“Code committees, fire service organizations, and fire safety advocates have rightly demanded data to support decisions related to code changes. NASFM feels the limited testing, in conjunction with a proposed commitment to conduct additional tests, is insufficient currently to warrant changes of this magnitude.”

“The National Association of State Fire Marshals is a longtime leader in fire safety, and as the senior fire officials in the United States, their voice makes a powerful statement for safer, stronger building codes,” said Kevin Lawlor, spokesperson for Build with Strength, a coalition of the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association consisting of community organizations, fire safety professionals, engineers, architects and industry experts committed to strengthening the nation’s building codes and ensuring greater access to secure housing. “Build with Strength applauds NASFM for taking a stand for the safety of our communities across the country.”

Build with Strength, a coalition of the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association (NRMCA), has launched a campaign to educate citizens, local and state officials, and industry experts about the inherent dangers of wood-framed construction, particularly in multi-story, residential and commercial buildings. As a grassroots organization, they work with local elected officials and industry workers, from architects to project managers to advocate for the safety benefits of working with concrete-based construction.

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