

Amendment to SB 503

1 Amend the bill by replacing section 1 with the following:

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3 1 Statement of Findings and Purpose. The general court finds that:

4 I. The majority of structural timber harvested for building materials in New Hampshire  
5 comes from Coos County and many areas of Coos County extend farther north than portions of  
6 Canada where lumber is graded as spruce pine fir (SPF).

7 II. Timber graded as SPF from Canada is viewed as stronger and denser under international  
8 design standards in part because of cold climate growth conditions; however, New Hampshire's  
9 northern climate, soils, and growing conditions are substantially similar, and produce the same  
10 species of spruce, pine, and fir included in the SPF designation.

11 III. Architects and engineers typically specify "SPF" lumber in certain residential  
12 construction documents. Because "SPF" is an international designation reserved to Canadian  
13 graded wood, New Hampshire's native lumber graders cannot certify New Hampshire-grown spruce,  
14 pine, and fir as SPF. Instead, the same species must be graded as spruce-pine-fir south (SPFS),  
15 which is viewed in the industry as a separate, slightly weaker classification.

16 IV. This technical distinction disadvantages New Hampshire sawmills, loggers, and the  
17 forest products industry, even though New Hampshire-grown wood from the north country is of  
18 equal type and quality.

19 V. It is therefore the policy of the state of New Hampshire to ensure that New Hampshire  
20 families and New Hampshire builders can build New Hampshire homes with New Hampshire wood  
21 by eliminating the barrier between SPF and SPFS within the state building code.

22 VI. The general court of New Hampshire finds that wood density should be a latitudinal  
23 demarcation rather than an arbitrary designation of density based upon political borders. Viewed as  
24 latitude, New Hampshire encompasses 42 degrees, 40 minutes north up to 45 degrees, 18 minutes.  
25 Timber harvested to produce building lumber between the latitude of 43 degrees, 45 minutes, 18  
26 seconds north to 45 degrees, 18 minutes north warrants the same density demarcation as Canadian  
27 SPF unless otherwise designated by a licensed architect or structural engineer.

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29 Amend RSA 155-A:15, V as inserted by section 2 of the bill by replacing it with the following:

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31 V. Nothing herein prevents a licensed architect or engineer from specifying higher strength  
32 materials if required for safety and structural integrity of a structure. Licensed architects and

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**- Page 2 -**

- 1 structural engineers shall also consider and provide alternative options of construction utilizing
- 2 SPFS lumber.