



Estate Tax Reform Vote Pending

Source: NLBMDA, E-Update November 16, 2009

While Congressional tax committee leaders have continued to indicate that votes on the estate tax would be held before the end of the year, it is not yet clear in what form those votes will take. The NLBMDA Legislative Advocacy Committee at their October meeting reiterated their preference for full repeal of the tax, and support for potential compromises only if they maintain a high enough exemption level to protect the asset-heavy nature of a family-owned building supply company.

NLBMDA recently joined with other members of the Family Business Estate Tax Coalition (FBETC) to send a letter in support of the "Estate Tax Relief Act of 2009" (H.R. 3905), legislation introduced by Reps. Shelley Berkley (D-NV), Artur Davis (D-AL), Kevin Brady (R-TX) and Devin Nunes (R-CA) to provide additional estate tax relief and provide certainty to family businesses by instituting a permanent estate tax exemption level at \$5 million and estate tax rate at 35 percent, phased-in over ten years. If Congress does not take action before the end of the year, the tax will disappear for 2010 only to return in full in 2011. The Obama Administration has called for the 2009 levels of \$3.5 million exemption and 45% tax rate to be made permanent.✍

NLBMDA Makes Case for Eco-label Before American Lumber Standards Committee

Source: NLBMDA E-Update, Nov. 16, 2009

On November 13, National Lumber & Building Materials Dealers Association (NLBMDA) presented its proposal for an eco-label to the board of the American Lumber Standards Committee (ALSC) in Charleston, S.C. Representing NLBMDA were Val Hanson, former LBMI Trustee, Ken Marson, NLBMDA Board Member and NLBMDA's alternate representative ALSC and NLBMDA Counsel Frank Moore. This was NLBMDA's second presentation to the ALSC this year, the first made in June before a Task Group appointed from the committee to review recommendations for revisions to the American Softwood Lumber Standard (PS-20). NLBMDA had previously submitted written comments in response to a Federal Register notice requesting public input as part of a five year review of PS-20, which governs the grading rules for softwood lumber.

The case made to the ALSC by NLBMDA has focused on an on-product label for dimensional lumber that would verify that the raw material was sourced from a responsibly managed forest, without carrying any reference or claims relative to the proprietary forest management schemes (e.g. FSC, SFI, etc.) A system of certifying agencies would be accredited by the ALSC to certify that the raw material coming into the mill meets the requirements of chain-of-custody as recognized by an international standard, such as the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). This comes at a time when the dominant schemes are challenging each other before the Federal Trade commission, and the US Green Building Council is reviewing its requirements relative to the wood credit under the LEED.

At the meeting, Hansen, Marson, and Moore coordinated their efforts to secure a place on the ALSC agenda and requested that a task group of the ALSC be appointed to consider creating an eco-label program, either as a part of the PS-20 or as a stand-alone program similar to the heat-treated wood and wood pallet standards which ALSC also oversees. While the ALSC, in response in part to concerns about costs associated with establishing such a program, voted not to proceed at this point, a clear majority of the Committee expressed an understanding of the value of an eco-label and an on-going willingness to work with NLBMDA and others to consider how such a program may be established and managed.✍

If you have a regulatory issues you would like to see addressed, please contact the WRLA Office. The WRLA works with the National Lumber and Building Materials Dealers Association (NLBMDA) on national issues and with the Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce (WMC) to lobby on state of Wisconsin regulatory issues. You can reach the WRLA via phone at 800-236-3534 or via email at wrla@wrlamsi.com.