

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1224

C 171 L 99

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Requiring a permanent anchor for worker fall protection.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Commerce & Labor (Originally sponsored by Representatives Hurst, Conway, Campbell, Cairnes, Kessler, Clements, McIntire and Ogden).

House Committee on Commerce & Labor
Senate Committee on State & Local Government
Senate Committee on Labor & Workforce Development

Background:

According to the Department of Labor and Industries, in the three year period between 1996-1998, 328 workers fell from roofs during commercial construction, and 106 fell from roofs during residential construction. Four of these falls were fatal. The Bureau of Labor Statistics' data for 1995 show that nationally, falls from elevations accounted for 10 percent of all fatal work injuries and nearly one-third of all construction fatalities.

In Washington, the department requires construction workers to use fall prevention systems. Employees working ten feet or more above the ground are required to use fall restraint, fall arrest, or positioning device systems to prevent falls. Each of these systems may involve rigged restraint or arrest lines that secure workers to anchorage points. Construction workers secure safety lines to temporary anchors that screw or bolt to the structure they are working on, or to fixtures on the structure (e.g. a chimney). A permanent "roof anchor" normally is a galvanized metal ring or eyelet that is bolted to a roof.

The Washington State Building Code Council establishes the minimum building code requirements for buildings and structures in the state. The state building code does not require permanent anchors to be installed on structures.

Summary:

The Washington State Building Code Council must prepare a report to the Legislature documenting the need for requiring installation of permanent anchors on all new commercial and residential construction and when a roof is replaced on existing residential and commercial structures. The report will look at safety benefits of

requiring roof anchor installation, and make recommendations on the best design and placement of such anchors. The report is due to the Legislature by October 1, 1999.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 97 0

Senate 35 12

Effective: July 25, 1999