DRAFT LEGISLATIVE TEXT

Highlight Green Homes by Greening the MLS

DRAFT Ordinance/Resolution NO. ___

WHEREAS, the ____ [legislative body] of _____ [state/county/city/town] desires to grow the twenty-first century economy and to support home sales and purchases in this community by improving information transparency that will enable investment in, and returns from, healthy, high-performance green homes; and

WHEREAS, healthy, high-performance, green homes are responsibly designed, constructed and renovated to consume less energy and water, to reduce the impacts of often unhealthy indoor air, and to protect or restore community health through a reduced environmental footprint; and

WHEREAS, healthy, high-performance, green homes are increasingly available and in demand, however significant barriers exist to communicate the demand for and the value of this real estate – and the public between prospective buyers, sellers, realtors, lenders, and appraisers; and

WHEREAS, banks and other lending institutions rely on appraisers to verify the value of a property against which they issue home loans; and

WHEREAS, the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) is the preeminent service used by appraisers, realtors, buyers and sellers of residential properties to broadcast and interpret information about properties that are for sale within the MLS territory; and

WHEREAS, the vast majority of Multiple Listing Services are not designed to differentiate between properties (or attributes of specific properties) that incorporate healthy, high-performance, green home design, construction, systems and materials; and

WHEREAS, with limited information about assessed property values for homes within the community that include similar green building attributes, an appraiser is not able to assess any additional value to a healthy, high-performance, green home – despite its increased demand, reduced operating costs, and lower environmental footprint; and

WHEREAS, a number of Multiple Listing Services have begun to incorporate methods to collect this information from property owners and communicate this information – including _____ [Tucson, AZ; Boulder, CO; Traverse City, MI; Memphis, TN… find others more local to your area here] – thus unlocking the potential for the supply of and demand for healthy, high-performance, green homes to achieve market efficiency; and

WHEREAS, without existing regulation or national standards, the quality and quantity of information made available through an MLS is important to coordinate across MLS territories to effectively enable this market for healthy, high-performance, green homes; and

WHEREAS, third-party-verified standards and rating systems offer a means for all parties to more clearly and succinctly understand and communicate the energy efficiency and "green" attributes that home buyers are demanding, which, coupled with the success of pioneering boards of realtors that have already addressed this challenge of information transparency, can significantly reduce the burden on making such improvements to an MLS;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

(a) The ___ [appropriate agency with oversight on building energy efficiency] shall establish a coordinating committee to facilitate communication between residential real estate stakeholders, and to coordinate a consistent, statewide path forward for information transparency of healthy, high-performance green home labels and attributes between home buyers and home sellers through the advancement, at minimum, of "green" Multiple Listing Services.

(b) The ____ [legislative body] of _____ [state/county/city/town] hereby urges the local ____ [board(s) of realtors or other appropriate entities] to enable the sharing of critical information about responsible, healthy, high-performance green homes – that are in increasing supply, and increasingly demanded – by incorporating voluntary data fields into the Multiple Listing Service. So as to promote the most efficient, effective and nationally consistent means of information exchange, the MLS data fields should include, at a minimum:

   i. Data fields that communicate third-party verified green home labels such as LEED for Homes; and [more info here]

   ii. Data fields that communicate third-party verified energy efficient home labels such as ENERGY STAR for Homes [more info here] and the Home Energy Rating System (HERS) Index [more info here].

(c) The ____ [legislative body] of _____ [state/county/city/town] hereby promotes the voluntary disclosure of such relevant information via realtors through the Multiple Listing Service, for those properties committed to using such a platform.

U.S. GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL
2101 L St NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20037 • Phone (202) 828-7422 • USGBC.org

For much greater depth of information on how to pursue a green MLS, see: http://greenthemls.org

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