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May 12, 2011

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
U.S. Senate
520 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Robert Portman
U.S. Senate
338 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Shaheen and Senator Portman:

On behalf of the U.S. Green Building Council and our nearly 16,000 organizational members and 80 local chapters, I'd like to thank you for introducing, "the Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act of 2011."

Buildings annually account for 39% of U.S. primary energy use.^[1] Increasing the efficiency of buildings decreases utility costs, while having a positive return on investment for consumers and business. This legislation has the potential to deploy resource efficiency across all sectors of our economy, especially the built environment.

Provisions of the bill, including those that enhance leadership by the federal government, are of particular importance. The Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act contains several provisions, including building upgrades, advanced metering and other utility saving techniques which will improve resource efficiency of federal agencies. Targeting these untapped opportunities can save a significant amount of taxpayer money by making our nation's federal buildings and operations more efficient.

The Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act also includes provisions to regularly update the existing national model codes. As a contributor and strategic partner in the release of the International Green Construction Code (IGCC) USGBC supports the development and use of stronger minimum codes and standards to strengthen performance and raise the floor for all buildings. We look forward to working with you to enhance this provision of the bill to ensure that the distinct and complementary roles of codes and rating systems are enabled to realize the potential of sustainable buildings and communities.

We are also pleased the bill expands existing financing programs at the Department of Energy (DOE) to advance efficiency opportunities in our nation's schools, hospitals and municipal buildings. Programs like these, included in President Obama's Better Building Initiative, offer significant opportunities to leverage private financing to deliver real utility savings to financially restrained

^[1] *Energy Information Administration (2008). Assumptions to the Annual Energy Outlook; Energy Information Administration (2008). EIA Annual Energy Outlook.*



school districts and municipal governments. However, more can be done if we are able to clarify that financing opportunities are available to be pooled or aggregated and apply to private commercial real-estate.

We look forward to working with you and your staff to strengthen the aforementioned provisions. And we commend your leadership in developing this comprehensive package and are committed to advancing this important legislation. Please let us know how best we can be of any assistance in this effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jason Hartke". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jason Hartke
Vice President, National Policy
U.S. Green Building Council