



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Obama Administration Poised to Take Immediate Action to Help Transform America's Building Stock**

*New report identifies immediate opportunities for advancing a cost-efficient and energy-saving green building agenda*

Washington, DC (April 29, 2010) – The Obama Administration is authorized to play a more active and supportive role in encouraging and progressing the energy efficiency and sustainability of America's multifamily and commercial building stock, according to a report released today by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) and other leading organizations in energy, housing, environment and real estate.

The legal analysis, "Using Executive Authority to Achieve Greener Buildings: A Guide for Policymakers to Enhance Sustainability and Efficiency in Multifamily Housing and Commercial Buildings," concludes that under current executive authority, the Obama Administration has the ability to use over 30 existing federal programs worth \$72 billion to enhance efficiency in commercial buildings and multifamily housing, with no new legislation.

"As an early adopter of green buildings and the LEED green building certification system, the federal government has been a leader in bringing green buildings to cities and towns across America," said Roger Platt, Senior Vice President, Global Policy & Law, USGBC. "This new report unveils an even larger opportunity for the Obama Administration to increase our nation's energy efficiency, while creating thousands of jobs and saving taxpayers money."

The report presents an extensive menu of options, across an array of programs, which the Obama Administration could begin implementing immediately without having to seek new funds or authority from Congress. Some of the most promising options with the largest reach include:

- Reforming appraisal and underwriting practices at Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac;
- "Greening" federal banking regulation;
- Promoting flexible FHA insurance products, especially Section 241;
- Integrating energy efficiency and sustainability criteria into competitive grants and funding formulas;
- Strengthening minimum property standards for federal housing and economic development programs to reflect energy efficiency and sustainability standards;
- Improving performance standards applicable to federal buildings and leases;
- Refining guidance applicable to the energy efficient commercial buildings tax deduction and the national historic preservation tax credit ;
- Using SBA funding mechanisms to support small business energy efficiency investments
- Streamlining Title 17 loan guarantees to make them suitable for buildings.

The report was prepared by Van Ness Feldman. Other sponsors of the report include The Real Estate Roundtable, UDR, Johnson Controls, Inc., The Energy Foundation, Building Owners and Managers Association International, The American Institute of Architects (AIA), Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning

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Contractors' National Association (SMACNA), Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), International Facility Management Association (IFMA), Energy Future Coalition, and C3.

To download the full report, visit [www.usgbc.org/government](http://www.usgbc.org/government)

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## **U.S. Green Building Council**

The Washington, D.C.-based U.S. Green Building Council is committed to a prosperous and sustainable future for our nation through cost-efficient and energy-saving green buildings.

With a community comprising 80 local affiliates, more than 18,000 member companies and organizations, and more than 155,000 LEED Professional Credential holders, USGBC is the driving force of an industry that is projected to contribute \$554 billion to the U.S. gross domestic product from 2009-2013. USGBC leads an unlikely diverse constituency of builders and environmentalists, corporations and nonprofit organizations, elected officials and concerned citizens, and teachers and students.

Buildings in the United States are responsible for 39% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, 40% of energy consumption, 13% water consumption and 15% of GDP per year, making green building a source of significant economic and environmental opportunity. Greater building efficiency can meet 85% of future U.S. demand for energy, and a national commitment to green building has the potential to generate 2.5 million American jobs.

## **LEED**

The U.S. Green Building Council's LEED green building certification system is the foremost program for the design, construction and operation of green buildings. Over 32,000 projects are currently participating in the commercial and institutional LEED rating systems, comprising over 9.6 billion square feet of construction space in all 50 states and 114 countries.

By using less energy, LEED-certified buildings save money for families, businesses and taxpayers; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and contribute to a healthier environment for residents, workers and the larger community.

USGBC was co-founded by current President and CEO Rick Fedrizzi, who spent 25 years as a Fortune 500 executive. Under his 15-year leadership, the organization has become the preeminent green building, membership, policy, standards, influential, education and research organization in the nation.

For more information, visit [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org).

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