February 17, 2011

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader of the House of Representatives
235 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Minority Leader Pelosi:

We, the undersigned organizations and companies, write to voice our strong opposition to provisions in H.R. 1, the Full Year Continuing Appropriations Act of 2011, which would decrease the General Services Administration's (GSA) Federal Buildings Fund by $1.6 billion. We encourage you to reject this proposal and work with the Senate and the Administration to produce a plan that does not hinder common-sense efforts to reduce federal operating costs while sustaining and fostering private sector employment in the building industry.

As the owner or lessee of space in 8,600 buildings across the nation, GSA initiates and manages a diverse range of facility design, construction, rehabilitation, restoration, renovation, and operations projects in communities throughout the country. The GSA Federal Buildings Fund is an important program that helps reduce the federal government's operating expenses through high performance facility upgrades, operations maintenance and new construction. GAO has identified that addressing the needs of aging and deteriorating federal facilities remains a problem for real property-holding agencies, and that according to recent estimates, tens of billions of dollars are needed to repair or restore these assets so that they are fully functional.[1] Failure to update these buildings would force taxpayers to unnecessarily subsidize poor utility bills in the short term while leaving them exposed to additional long term expenses as restoring and upgrading facilities becomes more costly over time.

The GSA Federal Buildings Fund also provides a critical role in sustaining and fostering private sector employment in the building industry. At a time when unemployment in the construction sector still exceeds 22%, reducing funding for the Fund would exacerbate an already dire situation for the industry.

Again, we urge you to reject the dramatic cuts to the GSA's Federal Buildings Fund that are proposed in H.R. 1. We appreciate your consideration of this serious request and your ongoing support of a cost efficient federal government that promotes, not hinders, private sector employment.

Sincerely,

AEC Science and Technology, LLC
American Institute of Architects
American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE)
American Society of Landscape Architects

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[1] The GAO Report can be accessed here: www.gao.gov/new.items/d09801t.pdf page 16

American Supply Association
American Rivers
Bentley Systems, Inc.
Building Owners and Managers Association International
National Insulation Association
Polyisocyanurate Insulation Manufacturers Association (PIMA)
Institute for Market Transformation
Ecobuild America
Energy Future Coalition
Environment America
EIFS Industry Members Association (EIMA)
GREENGUARD Environmental Institute
HOK
Illuminating Engineering Society (IES)
International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators and Allied Workers
Johnson Controls Inc.
LonMark International
Mechanical Contractors Association of America
The Real Estate Roundtable
Service Employees International Union
Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ
Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors National Association
The Stella Group, Ltd.
U.S. Green Building Council
United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada

CC:

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid
Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell
Representative Hal Rogers, Chairman, House Appropriations
Representative Norm Dicks, Rnk. Member, House Appropriations
Senator Daniel Inouye, Chairman, Senate Appropriations
Senator Thad Cochran, Rnk. Member, Senate Appropriations
Representative Paul Ryan, Chairman, House Budget
Representative Chris Van Hollen, Rnk. Member, House Budget
Senator Kent Conrad, Chairman, Senate Budget
Senator Jeff Sessions, Rnk. Member, Senate Budget
Representative Jeff Denham, Chairman, Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton, Rnk. Member, Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure