

U.S. Green Building Council and 15 Partners Release Green Building Executive Action Report

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Report provides new recommendations to the Obama Administration for accelerating progress on advancing energy efficiency and sustainability in buildings

Washington, D.C. (Jan. 18, 2012) – Along with 15 partners, the U.S. Green Building Council today released a report that recommends nearly three dozen executive actions across 23 agency programs where the Obama Administration can drive the economic and environmental benefits of green building without new legislation.

The report, *Better Buildings Through Executive Action: Leveraging Existing Authorities to Promote Energy Efficiency and Sustainability in Multifamily, Residential and Commercial Buildings*, builds on a 2010 report that identified nearly 100 legal authority opportunities across 30 existing federal programs worth more than \$72 billion to improve energy efficiency in U.S. building stock.

Partners included The Real Estate Roundtable, HDR, Schneider Electric, Johnson Controls, Enterprise Community Partners, Natural Resources Defense Council, United Technologies Corporation, Lennar Homes, Energy Foundation, Ingersoll Rand, Siemens, National Association of State Energy Officials, The Center for American Progress, National Housing Conference and Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) International.

"In the time since we distributed this original report in 2010, the unemployment crisis has deepened and Congress has become further paralyzed by partisan gridlock and concerns over the deficit. We felt it was important to once again draw attention to the potential to create jobs and accelerate economic growth through energy efficient and sustainable buildings," said Roger Platt, Senior Vice President, Global Policy & Law, USGBC. "This potential only takes root when matched by supportive federal policies, such as the Administration's Better Buildings Initiative, which encourages investment in high-performance buildings."

USGBC and the partner organizations worked closely with federal government officials to identify new executive policymaking opportunities to achieve greener buildings. Since the first report in April 2010, there has been significant progress in implementing several proposals, including the Administration's Better Buildings Initiative, such as improving the Energy Efficiency Commercial Building Tax Deduction, using Department of Energy loan guarantees and utilizing Small Business Administration financing programs to support energy efficiency retrofits at commercial buildings.

"Identifying and implementing these new opportunities could create more than a million green building retrofit jobs and save Americans \$130 billion a year," said Jason Hartke, Vice President, National Policy, USGBC.

Specifically, the report identifies significant new opportunities within programs and legal authorities. Some of the most promising opportunities include:

- Releasing updated guidance on the use of Section 179D, the deduction for energy efficient commercial buildings
- Overcoming obstacles for building owners to capture aggregated data of tenant energy consumption in multi-tenant structures
- Facilitating the use of widely recognized residential energy efficiency labels
- Integrating building energy efficiency and sustainability into programs managed by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration
- Better utilizing the Department of Defense's procurement and research authorities to promote green buildings
- Implementing all cost-effective retrofits identified through audits carried out by federal agencies, using energy savings performance contracts (ESPCs) or other innovative financing

The report also provides a summary of progress and major developments, including:

- The Administration's Better Buildings Initiative, which contains many elements of the 2010 report, such as improving the Energy Efficiency Commercial Building Tax Deduction, using Department of Energy loan guarantees, and utilizing Small Business Administration financing programs to support energy efficiency retrofits at commercial buildings
- An inter-agency effort to establish uniform energy efficiency standards across federal housing programs and to require the use of "green capital needs assessments" to identify and encourage energy efficiency or sustainability improvements in federally assisted housing
- Reforms that give energy efficient and sustainable housing an edge in a number of competitive solicitations managed by the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Housing and Urban Development
- A joint initiative by the Department of Energy and the Appraisal Foundation to promote fair appraisal standards and practices with respect to energy efficient and sustainable buildings
- A proposed commercial building energy performance rating program sponsored by the Department of Energy

The report was prepared by Van Ness Feldman. To download the full report, visit www.usgbc.org/executiveaction.

About the U.S. Green Building Council

The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) is committed to a prosperous and sustainable future through cost-efficient and energy-saving green buildings. USGBC works toward its mission of market transformation through its LEED green building certification program, robust educational offerings, a nationwide network of chapters and affiliates, the annual Greenbuild International Conference & Expo, and advocacy in support of public policy that encourages and enables green buildings and communities. For more information, visit usgbc.org and connect on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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