

USGBC Supported Legislation Highlighted in Senate Energy Hearing

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Today the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee continued its efforts to craft energy legislation that can gain bipartisan support in the Senate by hearing testimony on key green building and efficiency legislation.

The panel heard from leading private sector and government witnesses regarding S. 963, the "Reducing Federal Energy Dollars (RFED) Act of 2011," which Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.) announced at USGBC's annual [Government Summit](#). RFED, which is supported by USGBC and many others in the building community, ensures that federal buildings and future federal leases go through commissioning, or "tune-ups," on essential building systems to maximize performance. [In testimony](#) before the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee earlier this year, USGBC highlighted commissioning as one of the most cost-effective strategies for reducing utility costs in buildings and encouraged its use toward greening the federal buildings stock. The bill also makes it easier for federal agencies to use private financing tools to pay for energy-efficient building upgrades, increases clarity of agency energy use, and allows for building design updates.

The committee also heard from the witnesses on S. 1000, the "Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act." The measure from Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) and Senator Rob Portman (R-Ohio) includes many similar proposals advanced in the "American Clean Energy and Leadership Act of 2009" or (ACELA). The broad-based bill increases efficiency standards for appliances and building energy codes. It creates new loan programs and expands existing ones to encourage efficiency upgrades, as well as boosts energy conservation within the federal government.

At the hearing, Senate Energy Chairman Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) and Ranking Member Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) did not indicate when the committee might begin the process of considering these bills to move them along to the Senate floor for full consideration. However, as energy prices continue to rise there will be continued pressure to address both the demand side of energy use as well as production.

[Read the summary of S. 963 »](#)

[Read the USGBC support letter on S. 963 »](#)

[Read the industry support letter of S. 963 circulated by the National Institute of Buildings Sciences »](#)

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