

Engage, Inform, Establish, Repeat: New Policy Brief Highlights Advocates' Established Feedback Loops

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Every day, green building professionals are on the forefront of designing and building a better world. Invariably, I see how their good work spills over into the policy arena. I work with advocates across the country to make sure their expert voice is heard by policymakers, and that we're all working together to put forth the best policies to propel the green building industry.

Like the president said in his inaugural address this week, we know society's ills cannot be cured through government and public policy alone. The same goes for the Triple-Bottom Line objectives that green building intends to enhance and proliferate, but public policy certainly can serve as an accelerant that complements the powerful driver of private market forces.

Advocacy efforts often spearheaded by USGBC's nationwide chapter network have forged coalitions between building industry professionals, environmental groups, leading lawmakers and the public to initiate a windfall of green building policy over the last 10 years. Across the country, these community initiatives – first pioneered in a long list of states, cities, counties and towns – have paved the way for so many others to follow.

At the risk of oversimplifying the broad universe of policy opportunities, I have described the [green building policy puzzle](#) to largely consist of three pieces: government leadership by example, incentives for private sector leadership, and a minimum threshold or 'floor' for all buildings. From this list (and certainly beyond), many will choose to adapt these laws and ordinances and make them their own. Others will roll up their sleeves to blaze a unique trail.

In an effort to explore and explain the range of government initiatives that have been established to shape public policy that spurs investment and growth in the emerging green building economy, USGBC has developed a new policy brief: [Guiding Green Building Policy](#). This brief highlights four distinct approaches that governments take to harness community insights, commit staff and support the development and implementation of green building policy. They are:

- Temporary 'Task Force'
- Established 'Committee'
- Staffed 'Program Office'
- Integrated 'Perspective'

Each of these approaches is elaborated in the brief along with a few examples. Looking for green building policy ideas? Check out USGBC's active

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