LEED SAVING TAXPAYERS MONEY, CREATING AMERICAN JOBS AND LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Government at all levels has a responsibility to use taxpayer dollars both wisely and transparently. Through its investments, governments can protect and expand the American workforce and also catalyze future competitiveness and growth of domestic enterprise. High performance, LEED-certified buildings have a strong track record of serving these important goals and more. By using LEED, a voluntary, market-driven green building certification program, thousands of public buildings have saved money, demonstrated strong environmental stewardship, supported local investment, and helped create jobs. These buildings become iconic civic structures, reflecting smart, responsible and fiscally sound governance.

LEED SAVES TAXPAYERS MONEY

Just as in the private sector, new and upgraded LEED public buildings can save money by using less energy and water and by creating an environment for more productive occupants. Governments across the nation are choosing to achieve LEED certification in their public buildings to deliver the proven economic and environmental benefits of green building. For example, U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) LEED-certified government buildings use 27 percent less energy and cost 19 percent less to operate compared to the national average. GSA is a participant in the LEED Volume program, which can reduce certification fees by up to 80%.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury’s iconic headquarters (pictured), earned LEED Gold in 2011. The building, which made significant building operation improvements to slash energy and water consumption, saves taxpayers $3.5 million per year. This is just one LEED-certified federal project. Across more than 20 agencies and departments, the federal government has certified nearly 4,000 LEED projects, driving tremendous taxpayer savings while also creating jobs and reducing environmental impacts.

LEED PROMOTES ACCOUNTABILITY

For better buildings, accountability makes a difference. Through a carefully managed, independent, third-party verification system, LEED affirms the integrity of green building commitments by ensuring project teams are delivering on design plans and goals. Third-party validation helps guarantee that each project saves energy, water and other resources, reducing the overall environmental impact. No cutting corners. Taxpayers deserve to know they’re getting a strong return on their investment.

An independent, nonpartisan agency that works for Congress and investigates how the federal government spends tax dollars, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently reviewed the use of third-party certification program by five federal agencies for this study, including the Department of Defense (DOD) and the GSA. GAO concluded that third-party certification (of which LEED is the most common) helps to ensure compliance with various federal building obligations by holding contractors and agency project teams accountable for incorporating these requirements.

LEED CREATES JOBS, BUILDINGS DEFINE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Government is helping turn the gears of job creation while also encouraging the spread of innovative building science and technology. A Harvard Business School study found that public investment in LEED-certified government buildings stimulates private investment, supply and market uptake of greener building practice. The research finds that green public building commitments produce a near doubling effect in private investment across the building sector and up and down the supply chain of products, professionals and services – not to mention the energy and water savings.

2 https://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2011/12/21/treasury-green-our-favorite-color-well-take-leed-gold
3 LEED project data, accessed November, 2015
Neighboring communities experience a 60% increase in the same, all of which is encouraged by government leadership by example.¹

According to a recently released report by Booz Allen Hamilton, commissioned by USGBC, green construction contributed significantly to the national GDP with a net direct economic impact of $60.7 billion and an indirect impact of $68.9 billion in 2015. It is expected to grow to $85.4 billion and $98.3 billion respectively by 2018. This means that the green construction market’s impact on GDP is projected to increase by 41% from 2015 to 2018. It is estimated that in 2015, green construction will directly contribute 796,000 jobs to the U.S. economy while $53.6 billion of all wages will be directly accounted for by the green construction industry. By 2018, these numbers are predicted to increase to 1.1 million and $75.6 billion respectively.⁵

**BUILDINGS DEFINE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES**

Our buildings are at the heart of our communities. From our town halls to courthouses, from capitol domes to train stations, buildings help define the places we live and work. When governments commit to build green – and especially to LEED – it is a statement of leadership and pride. Green public buildings demonstrate a commitment to a safe, stronger, and more comfortable today, without compromising a brighter, healthier, more prosperous tomorrow.

**LEED CERTIFICATIONS***

*Chart reflects certifications for federal and non-federal projects as of October 2015.

**LEED: THE INDUSTRY STANDARD FOR FEDERAL AGENCIES AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEDERAL ENTITY</th>
<th>LEED-CERTIFIED PROJECTS</th>
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<td>FEDERAL GOVERNMENT (TOTAL)</td>
<td>3,974</td>
<td>163,877,203</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Project statistics are as of October 2015

¹ Timothy Simcoe and Michael W. Toffel (2012) _Public Procurement and the Private Supply of Green Building_