

ALLEN BOYD
SECOND DISTRICT, FLORIDA
COMMITTEE:
APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEES:
AGRICULTURE AND RELATED AGENCIES
MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS
AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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July 02, 2010

Mr. Rick Fedrizzi, President and CEO
US Green Building Council
2101 L Street NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20037

Dear Mr. Fedrizzi:

As a Congressman who represents many small woodlot owners, I am writing to express concern over the US Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system.

While I appreciate the efforts of the USGBC to promote energy efficiency and environmental conservation, I am very concerned that the LEED rating system's wood credit does not recognize two of the largest sustainable forest certification programs in the US – the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) – and recognizes only Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood.

Over 84 million acres of forests in the United States are certified to SFI or ATFS, almost three times the amount of forests certified to FSC nationally. If the LEED rating system maintains the status quo and does not recognize SFI or ATFS, many builders seeking LEED certification would be discouraged to use third-party certified SFI and ATFS products grown here in the US. Furthermore, by requiring wood to have third party certification to receive a credit and not forcing that requirement on steel and concrete, the USGBC is discouraging the overall use of a product that uses less energy and produces less pollution in its manufacturing.

I understand that the LEED rating system has proposed draft benchmarks to evaluate forest certification programs, but I am concerned that they do not offer a clear and simple way to give credit for all of the major third-party forest certification systems operating in the US. Broadening the number of eligible certification programs could stimulate the market for American produced forest products and the communities and jobs that depend on both.

I encourage you and your organization to expedite your review of forest management certification systems and to accept all credible forest management certification systems for qualification under the LEED rating system. Doing so will help ensure strong markets for domestic lumber producers and our forest landowners, which is vital to the future of our forests and our forest industry workers.

Sincerely,



Allen Boyd
Member of Congress