



American Forest Foundation

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Contacts: Nadine Block, SFI Senior Director
Government Outreach
Tel: 202-596-3456

Jennifer Jones, Vice President
Communications
American Forest Foundation
Tel: 202-459-1394

**SFI, AFF Applaud Members of Congress
for Urging LEED to Accept SFI® and American Tree Farm System®**

WASHINGTON, DC – A bipartisan group of Members of Congress sent a letter this week to Rick Fedrizzi, President & CEO of the U.S. Green Building Council, urging USGBC to “accept all credible forest management certification systems for qualification under the LEED rating system,” because it “will provide a great incentive for the utilization of domestically produced forest products.” The letter was signed by Rep. Glenn “GT” Thompson, (R- PA), chair of the Agriculture Subcommittee on Conservation, Energy and Forestry, Rep. Kurt Schrader (D-OR), and six other Members (see complete list below). The full letter is available [here](#). Rep. Glenn Thompson released a statement available [here](#).

Rep. Kurt Schrader released the following statement:

“Wood and wood products represent one of the greenest renewable resources available for building materials. The Sustainable Forestry Initiative and the American Tree Farm System are two of the largest wood certification standards in the country. The USGBC should immediately recognize and adopt both standards as part of their LEED certified rating system to ensure that we are supporting domestically produced wood products in LEED certified buildings.”

SFI President and CEO Kathy Abusow released the following statement:

“We applaud Rep. Thompson, Rep. Schrader and all the other signatories to the letter that urges USGBC to recognize SFI and other credible forest certification standards in LEED. The proposed changes to LEED still fall well short of supporting the future of our forests. When will USGBC heed the repeated calls of Members of Congress, federal agencies, governors, state foresters, conservation groups, academics and countless others to stop discriminating against well-managed domestic forests?”

Just last year the US Department of Agriculture, in announcing their program to promote wood in green building said “Sustainability of forest products can be verified using any credible third-party rating system, such as Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Forest Stewardship Council or American Tree Farm System certification.”

American Forest Foundation President and CEO Tom Martin released the following statement:

“AFF continues to be concerned that USGBC discourages the use of wood by failing to recognize the American Tree Farm System® as a responsible source of certified wood. While USGBC has made some progress in acknowledging the



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need to look at the environmental impacts of all building materials -- including wood -- there is still progress to be made in giving credit where credit is due. Wood is one of the greenest building materials and using wood supports America's hard working family forest owners who are the largest ownership group of America's forests. These families need healthy markets to continue to keep forests healthy, our air and water clean, and wildlife habitat intact."

The letter also mentioned that the Members are encouraged by LEED's new proposed credits for Life Cycle Assessment because it "provides a pathway for wood's environmental benefits to be recognized."

For more information on the widespread support for real change in LEED, visit <http://sfiprogram.com/leed/> SFI also recently sent USGBC leaders this [Open Letter – Top Ten Reasons Why USGBC Should Recognize all Credible Forest Certification Standards](#).

In addition to Representatives Thompson and Schrader, the following Members also signed the letter to USGBC:

Rep. Walter Jones (R-NC)
Rep. Terri Sewell (D-AL)
Rep. Jamie Herrera Beutler (R-WA)

Rep. Mike Ross (D-AR)
Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-NC)
Rep. Mike McIntyre (D-NC).

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About SFI Inc.

SFI Inc. (www.sfiprogram.org) is an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization, and is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the internationally recognized Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) program. Across North America, more than 195 million acres/79 million hectares are certified to the SFI forest management standard, making it the largest single forest standard in the world.

About American Forest Foundation

The **American Forest Foundation** works nationwide and in partnership with local, state, and national groups to provide hands-on support for America's 10 million family forest owners, giving them the tools they need to manage healthy and sustainable woodlands.

The **American Tree Farm System**® is a network of 89,000 family forest owners sustainably managing 27 million acres of forestland. It is the largest and oldest sustainable woodland system in America, internationally recognized, meeting strict third-party certification standards.