



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

JUL 19 2016

The Honorable Kurt Schrader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20510

OFFICE OF CHEMICAL SAFETY  
AND POLLUTION PREVENTION

Dear Congressman Schrader:

Thank you for your letter of May 17, 2016, and your interest in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Interim Recommendations of Specifications, Standards, and Ecolabels for federal environmentally sustainable procurement.

The EPA is seeking clarification from the US Green Building Council (USGBC) on whether the LEED Alternative Compliance Pathway that awards credit for forest products certified to the SFI and ATFS standards sufficiently addresses environmental criteria or is focused more narrowly on legality of harvesting.

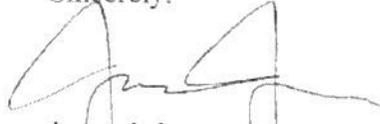
As outlined in previous communications, The Implementing Instructions for Executive Order 13693 - Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade - directed the EPA, in consultation with the Office of Management and Budget and the Council on Environmental Quality, to issue these recommendations to assist federal purchasers in identifying and procuring environmentally sustainable products. The basis for our Interim Recommendations on wood/lumber was the DOE GreenBuy Program. The EPA is pursuing several tracks to determine if an update to the lumber/wood interim recommendations is appropriate, and we have updated our website to reflect that fact (see the footnote for Lumber/Wood under the Construction sector at <https://www.epa.gov/greenerproducts/epas-recommendations-specifications-standards-and-ecolabels>).

As previously communicated, the EPA is engaging with both the Department of Energy and the US Department of Agriculture in a high-level review to determine the effectiveness of these standards in protecting human health and the environment. Further, the EPA's Standards Executive is currently reviewing the forestry standards to determine if they were developed through a voluntary consensus approach consistent with the National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act (NTTAA) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-119. Finally, SFI, ATFS, CSA and FSC have each volunteered to have their forestry standards assessed against the criteria developed through a multi-stakeholder consensus process in the Guidelines pilot for the flooring and furniture sectors. The results of that pilot assessment can help inform whether those standards would meet the EPA's baseline criteria for environmental performance as specified in the EPA's draft Guidelines for Environmental Performance Standards and Ecolabels for use in Federal procurement. The EPA will consider the input received from federal colleagues, stakeholders, and experts, along with information obtained during our assessment of forestry standards during the pilot process to inform the further

refinement and finalization of the EPA's guidelines and recommendations. We believe we can decide on a path forward within the next several months.

Again, thank you for your letter. If you have further questions, please contact me or your staff may contact Sven-Erik Kaiser in the EPA's Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations at [kaiser.sven-erik@epa.gov](mailto:kaiser.sven-erik@epa.gov) or 202-566-2753.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James J. Jones', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

James J. Jones  
Assistant Administrator