



THEODORE R. KULONGOSKI
Governor

November 30, 2009

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

Dear Mr. Fedrizzi:

Oregon has a long-standing and deep commitment to sustainability, and applauds the US Green Building Council for promoting this goal in architectural, engineering and construction practices. The LEED Building Standards can be an important vehicle for promoting energy conservation, the appropriate management of natural resources and the reduction of greenhouse gases.

Verifying that wood products originate from lands managed under sustainable forestry practices can, indeed, be an important component of green building standards. Proposed revisions to the LEED Standard, though, would appear to discriminate against many of our domestic forest products sources, while continuing to more exclusively promote construction material produced under the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification program.

The FSC program is certainly laudable, but the vast majority of Oregon's wood products industry has elected to utilize the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) certification program. Like FSC participants, their management under SFI third-party certification represents a commitment to responsible forestry that goes well beyond Oregon's comprehensive forest practice laws.

In addition, our State has nearly 16 million acres of federal forests and 800 thousand acres of state-owned forests where environmental and social benefits are emphasized to an even greater degree. Yet wood from these lands would also appear to be ineligible for most, if not all, LEED credits, while FSC wood from foreign countries could get full credit. Importing wood rather than strongly encouraging local sources seems highly counter to the principles of sustainability.

I hope as revision of the LEED Standards moves forward you will consider these concerns and shape the program in a way that allows US wood produced in an environmentally sound manner to be used. I recognize that this end could be more easily achieved if the two sustainable forestry certification programs were to reconcile differences in their standards.

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Accordingly, I would be pleased to use the resources of my office to facilitate reconciliation. However, absent that, I urge the US Green Building Council to consider the benefits to America's forest industry workers and businesses that a broader approach would foster.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Theodore R. Kulongoski', written in a cursive style with a large initial 'T'.

THEODORE R. KULONGOSKI
Governor

TRK:mc:jb