

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 17, 2012

The Honorable Steven Chu
Secretary of Energy
1000 Independence Ave SW
Washington, DC 20585-0002

The Honorable Leon Panetta
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

The Honorable Daniel Tangherlini
Administrator
U.S. General Services Administration
1800 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20405

Dear Secretary Chu, Secretary Panetta, and Administrator Tangherlini:

We write regarding the ongoing evaluation process of green building certification systems currently being conducted by the Department of Energy (DOE), the Department of Defense (DOD), and the General Services Administration (GSA). As you know, the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA) requires that every five years the DOE, in consultation with DOD and GSA, identify green building standards to be used across the Federal government.

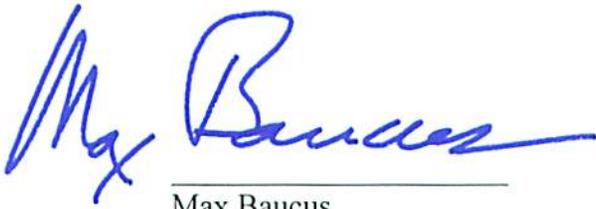
In March of this year, the General Services Administration's Office of Federal High-Performance Green Buildings released a study of green building certification systems. We acknowledge the responsibility of GSA to review and analyze certification systems that recognize the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and the American Tree Farm system (ATFS). This is a particular interest of ours as we note that over 84 million acres of forests in the United States are SFI or ATFS certified.

As the EISA process continues, we support an approach that is based on principles including peer-reviewed scientific analysis, sound economics, and input from all interested parties. We welcome Secretary Tom Vilsack's leadership on this issue as he announced in March 2011 that the Department of Agriculture will actively promote domestic timber products; domestically produced wood is among the most environmentally friendly resources that we have in this country.

Many of America's rural communities depend on forestry for their livelihood. The federal government should adopt a certification system that promotes the use of any and all responsibly produced domestic wood products, such as those certified by SFI and ATFS. As the

EISA process continues, we call for ample opportunities for public comment and due consideration to be given to all interested parties, so that an environmentally and economically sound approach can be reached that makes the most of what our forests and forest products industry have to offer. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Max Baucus". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Max" written in a larger, more prominent style than the last name "Baucus".

Max Baucus
U.S. Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Vitter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "David" written in a larger, more prominent style than the last name "Vitter".

David Vitter
U.S. Senator