



ISSUE BRIEF

Green Building

Objective: Oppose green building mandates in federal legislation that stifle competition and innovation in the rapidly growing green building field.

Background: NLBMDA members are increasingly participating in the residential green building movement as they respond to the growing demand for environmentally-friendly building materials. NLBMDA supports responsible forest practices and our members are committed to sourcing products from sustainably-managed forests. However, NLBMDA is opposed to efforts at the federal level to mandate the use of one specific green building standard.

Two new green building systems for residential construction have recently been introduced, the National Association of Homebuilders (NAHB) National Green Building Standard and LEED for Homes by the US Green Building Council (USGBC). Building material dealers are actively engaged in learning more about these standards to provide required materials to their builder customers. In recent years, there have been efforts to mandate that publicly-financed construction be certified to one standard, typically the LEED program. NLBMDA opposes government intervention to give preference to one program. We believe that the market will determine which program or programs are preferable for certain applications, and are concerned that stifling competition in this rapidly developing field could have unintended consequences of limiting further innovation. We urge Congress to support green building without imposing mandates that give preference to only one green rating system.

Current Status: A bill to reauthorize the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Hope VI community development program (H.R. 3524) early this year included language mandating that projects be built to LEED standards. Rep. Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) offered an amendment to remove the LEED-only language and instead require the HUD Secretary to determine an appropriate green building rating system. The amendment failed by a vote of 169-240 on January 17; the LEED-only language was later stricken from the bill in order to achieve final passage.

Committee Jurisdiction: House Financial Services and Resources Committees, Senate Finance and Environment & Public Works Committees

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