

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 26, 2010

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

Dear Mr. Fedrizzi:

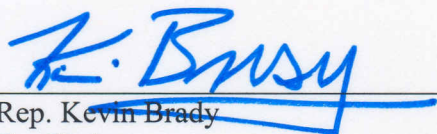
As members of the Congressional Timber Caucus we are deeply committed to environmental sustainability, and moreover, we appreciate the efforts by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) to promote energy efficiency and environmental conservation. Our states are extremely proud of their forests and the forest products industry. In our four states alone, this industry employs over 136,000 people.

Accordingly, we are concerned that the USGBC's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system discriminates against American wood products by prohibiting the two largest sustainable forest certification programs in the U.S. – the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) – from gaining credit because it only recognizes Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood.

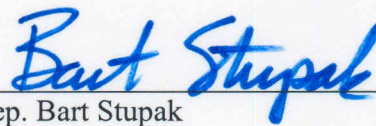
Over three-quarters of certified wood fiber in North America is certified under SFI, ATFS, and the Canadian Standards Association (CSA). If the status quo remains unchanged, and SFI and ATFS wood products are not recognized, we believe many LEED builders will turn away reputable third-party SFI and ATFS certified wood which is grown locally and instead turn to FSC certified wood, the large majority of which is grown in other countries. Wood products should be treated equally with other building products, such as steel and concrete, which are not required to have third-party environmental certification in order to receive a credit. Although the USGBC has developed draft benchmarks to evaluate forest certification programs, many in the timber and forest industry are concerned that SFI and ATFS certified forests remain ineligible for LEED forest certification while FSC products are exclusively recognized.

Therefore, we urge you and your organization to accept all forest management certification systems to prevent discrimination against domestically produced wood building products. These actions will help preserve strong markets for our lumber producers and forest landowners, which are vital to the future of our forests and our forest industry workers.

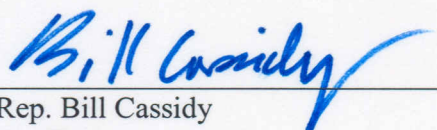
Sincerely,




Rep. Kevin Brady
Co-Chair
Congressional Timber Caucus



Rep. Bart Stupak
Co-Chair
Congressional Timber Caucus



Rep. Bill Cassidy
Co-Chair
Congressional Timber Caucus



Rep. Mike Ross
Co-Chair
Congressional Timber Caucus