

U.S. Green Building Council

"Fifty for Fifty" Initiative to Engage State Legislators in Every State to Develop Green Schools Caucuses

(September 4, 2008) Washington, DC - Today, the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) kicked off its "Fifty for Fifty" initiative working with state lawmakers in all 50 states to promote green school buildings. The Council's goal is for every state legislature in the nation to have its own caucus or working group of lawmakers advancing green schools for kids. Inspired by the successes of the Congressional Green Schools Caucus, the initiative will build on widespread participation in USGBC's LEED for schools program, which has over 1,000 green schools registered across the U.S.

At an event held this afternoon in Washington, DC at the National Press Club, the "Fifty for Fifty" Initiative provides state legislators with:

- Up-to-date information and developments in green building including trends, cost-benefit studies and incentives offered by localities to advance and promote green building
- Networking opportunities with like-minded legislators across the country
- Opportunities for partnerships with experts in their communities, from architects to engineers to contractors
- Opportunities to present best practices and successes in regional and national forums

State legislators launching the initiative will include:

The Honorable Karen May, Illinois
The Honorable Mary Brandenburg, Florida
The Honorable Patricia Haddad, Massachusetts
The Honorable Kenneth Plum, Virginia
The Honorable Mimi Stewart, New Mexico
The Honorable Jeremy Kalin, Minnesota



"For students and families across the country, more green schools ultimately mean more effective educational facilities, significant operating costs savings, a better environment, and healthier communities," said Rick Fedrizzi, President, CEO & Founding Chair, USGBC. "The caucuses will add the significant weight of their voices to this critically important effort. If we're successful at creating green schools for every child, no matter his or her economic bracket, we'll raise a generation of smart, healthier, inspired kids."

"Green school buildings and a supporting curriculum around their economic, environmental and societal benefits will prepare our students of today to live in tomorrow's resource constrained world. Energy conservation will be a part of daily life in the future. It's not enough to tell students that fact. We need to give them multiple opportunities to learn how to be more environmentally conscious and why it matters so much," said the Honorable Kenneth Plum, Virginia.

As the school year begins, nearly 1,000 school buildings - from Tacoma, Wash., to Tallahassee, Fla., - will have met or are seeking LEED green school certification, with applications growing at a rate of more than one per day. The total number of square feet of LEED certified and registered school space will exceed 100 million square feet as the school year gets underway, according to new figures released by USGBC.

For more information, visit www.buildgreenschools.org.
