

**BROAD COALITION URGES SUPPORT OF  
ENERGY EFFICIENT AND HEALTHY  
HOPE VI DEVELOPMENTS**

January 14, 2008

ATTN: Housing Staff

Dear Representative:

The undersigned organizations are writing in strong support of the green building provisions in the HOPE VI Improvement and Reauthorization Act of 2007 (H.R. 3524), which would require new HOPE VI developments to meet Green Communities Criteria for residential buildings and the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED for New Construction standards for related commercial buildings, or substantially similar criteria. This bill takes major steps toward meeting the needs of low-income families, who stand to benefit the most from housing that is healthy and energy-efficient.

Green design and building practices can create healthier home environments through better indoor air quality and healthier building materials. Smarter site planning and development that creates a sense of community, encourages walking and provides access to parks and mass transit is also healthier. HOPE VI is particularly well suited to incorporate mandatory sustainable development criteria because the projects are typically large, which enable efficiencies and economies of scale. HOPE VI also integrates site planning and vertical development, which is how the best sustainable projects generally are conceived.

This legislation is both critical and timely. HUD's current energy efficiency standards for HOPE VI developments are voluntary and do little to encourage green building. For example, under the current selection criteria for HOPE VI projects, HUD awards just 1 point out of a total of 125 for the use of Energy Star products.

Importantly, the bill includes provision of critically-needed technical assistance to help applicants implement sustainable design practices. Experience increasingly suggests that when green projects are planned, designed and built with efficiency at the forefront, going green does not slow down development or reduce the number of affordable units built.

Many states have recognized that the built environment and environmental sustainability are inextricably linked, and have provided both incentives and requirements for building greener affordable housing. Significant congressional leadership is necessary to further promote sustainable communities as well as lower utility costs and provide healthy living environments for low-income families. We believe H.R. 3524 will help achieve this goal.

We urge your full support of these provisions during the House vote on the bill, and urge you to reject any efforts to weaken them. Please call upon us if we can provide additional information or assistance.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Healthy Homes  
Alliance to Save Energy  
American Planning Association (APA)  
American Public Health Association (APHA)  
Atlanta Housing Authority  
California Community Economic Development Association (CCEDA)  
Center for Neighborhood Technology  
Council of Large Public Housing Authorities (CLPHA)  
Denver Housing Authority  
E.R. Bacon Development Company  
Enterprise Community Partners  
Gamaliel Foundation  
Global Green USA  
Housing Assistance Council (HAC)  
Lakewood (Colo.) Housing Authority  
Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)  
McCormack Baron Salazar  
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
National Alliance of Community and Economic Development Associations (NACEDA)  
National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development (National CAPACD)  
National Center for Healthy Housing (NCHH)  
National Council of La Raza (NCLR)  
National Housing Conference (NHC)  
National Housing Trust (NHT)  
National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC)  
National NeighborWorks Association  
National People's Action  
National Rural Housing Coalition  
National Training and Information Center  
Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)  
Reconnecting America  
Regional Plan Association  
Smart Growth America (SGA)  
Southern California Association of Non-Profit Housing (SCANPH)  
Transportation Equity Network  
US Conference of Mayors  
US Green Building Council