

May 18, 2009

The Honorable Allyson Schwartz
330 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Schwartz:

We the undersigned, representing the vertically-integrated U.S. green industry, are pleased to endorse your bill, H.R. 2222, the "Green Communities Act." This bill will secure a significant investment in our country's green infrastructure by recognizing an often overlooked aspect of the managed landscape. In addition to the environmental benefits derived through the ecosystem services provided, landscape trees and plants have substantial sociological and monetary value that positively affects commercial real estate, retail areas, municipal parks and public spaces.

Specifically, the U.S. green industry is most supportive of the "Community Greening Initiatives" provisions contained in H.R. 2222 that will fund:

- The revitalization of municipal parks and public spaces;
- Landscaping community gateways and key corridors; and
- Tree plantings and urban forestry projects.

Investments in landscape systems, such as those found in H.R. 2222, will yield visible and high returns in the form of employment, economic and social benefits, and will increase in monetary and environmental value over time. The benefits provided by trees and landscape plants in combating climate change, from carbon sequestration and associated ecosystems benefits to enhancing energy efficiency and reducing an energy consumer's reliance on fossil fuels, are complimentary to the purpose of this bill, and among the many reasons that federal policy must include investments in America's green infrastructure.

We look forward to working with you in securing passage of H.R. 2222 and for the appropriate funding necessary for the U.S. Department of Commerce to execute the program.

Sincerely,

American Nursery & Landscape Association
Alliance for Community Trees
Arizona Nursery Association
Associated Landscape Contractors of Colorado
California Association of Nurseries and Garden Centers
Colorado Nursery & Greenhouse Association
Connecticut Nursery & Landscape Association
Florida Nursery, Growers & Landscape Association

Idaho Nursery & Landscape Association
Illinois Landscape Contractors Association
Indiana Nursery & Landscape Association
Kentucky Nursery & Landscape Association
Landscape Contractors Association MD-DC-VA
Louisiana Irrigation Association
Louisiana Nursery & Landscape Association
Maine Landscape & Nursery Association
Massachusetts Association of Landscape Professionals
Massachusetts Nursery & Landscape Association
Michigan Green Industry Association
Michigan Nursery & Landscape Association
Minnesota Nursery & Landscape Association
Montana Nursery & Landscape Association
New England Nursery Association
New Jersey Nursery & Landscape Association
North Carolina Nursery & Landscape Association
Ohio Landscape Association
Ohio Nursery & Landscape Association
Oregon Association of Nurseries
Oregon Landscape Contractors Association
Pennsylvania Landscape & Nursery Association
Professional Landcare Network
South Carolina Nursery & Landscape Association
Tennessee Nursery & Landscape Association
Texas Nursery & Landscape Association
Utah Nursery & Landscape Association
Washington State Nursery & Landscape Association
Wisconsin Green Industry Federation
Wisconsin Nursery Association

According to a 2005 survey conducted by the University of Tennessee and the University of Florida, the vertically-integrated green industry in the United States has an estimated economic impact of \$147.8 billion. In addition, the U.S. green industry employs 1.95 million individuals, generates \$64.3 billion in labor income, and provides \$6.9 billion in indirect business taxes. According to the USDA's 2007 Census of Agriculture, nursery, greenhouse and floriculture crop sales totaled \$16.6 billion in 2007. Nursery and greenhouse crop production now ranks among the top five agricultural commodities in 28 states, and among the top 10 in all 50 states.