

July 29, 2008

Dear Representative Perlmutter:

The undersigned organizations write in support of the Green Resources for Energy Efficient Neighborhoods (GREEN) Act of 2008 (H.R. 6078), which we understand will likely be marked up by the House Financial Services Committee this month. We appreciate your leadership in sponsoring this important bill. We believe the bill is a major step toward a much-needed federal commitment to ensuring that affordable housing is more energy efficient, healthy and environmentally sustainable.

The principles and practices of “green” development offer proven, cost effective ways to address current and longstanding housing challenges, rising energy and transportation costs and the effects of global warming, all of which disproportionately affect low-income people. There is encouraging experience and research showing that affordable housing can deliver significant health, economic and environmental benefits from green building and rehabilitation practices on a cost effective basis with the right resources and approach. This holds true for all kinds of housing developments, in smaller as well as larger communities, throughout the country.

Nevertheless, making green development more mainstream in affordable housing will require a long-term commitment and will need to be phased in over time. It is critical that green development policies do not reduce the supply or affordability of homes for low-income families. It is also important to ensure that federal policies to advance green affordable development allow appropriate flexibility in implementing standards for higher performance. We greatly appreciate your expressed recognition of these issues and willingness to work with the housing community to address them as the GREEN Act moves through the legislative process.

“Greening” affordable housing – making it more energy efficient, healthier and more environmentally responsible – will help to ensure that the enormous promise of the emerging green economy includes opportunities for everyone in our society. We hope the Committee and the full House will expedite consideration of the GREEN Act and we look forward to working with you to help make that happen. Please call upon us if we can provide additional information or assistance.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Community Trees
Alliance for Healthy Homes
American Institute of Architects
American Planning Association
American Public Health Association
Center for American Progress Action Fund
Center for Neighborhood Technology
Council of Large Public Housing Authorities
Enterprise Community Partners, Inc.
E. R. Bacon Development Corporation
Habitat for Humanity International

Housing Assistance Council
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
National Alliance of Community Economic Development Associations
National Center for Healthy Housing
National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development
National Housing Conference
National Housing Trust
National Low Income Housing Coalition
National NeighborWorks Association
Smart Growth America
Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future
U.S. Green Building Council

CC: Members of the House Financial Services Committee