

TESTIMONY OF
THE LUMBER DEALERS' ASSOCIATION OF CONNECTICUT

BEFORE
THE LEGISLATURE'S PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 2009
1:00 PM, ROOM 2A LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING

Good afternoon. My name is Marshall Collins. I am appearing in my capacity as the Counsel for Government Relations for the Lumber Dealers' Association of Connecticut ("LDAC". The LDAC represents approximately 100 independent Connecticut suppliers of building materials. LDAC members have been an integral part of our communities for nearly 150 years.

LDAC must express its concern with the language of SB 1033 An Act Establishing A Tax Credit For Green Buildings.

SB 1033 would extend the credit only for projects that meet or exceed the "applicable LEED Green Building Rating System gold certification:

“(3) “Eligible project” means ...only that building or building within such project that is designed to meet or exceed the applicable LEED Green Building Rating System gold certification...”.

The language is unnecessarily restrictive and has the potential to disrupt the supply of certified lumber products to LDAC members. In this extraordinarily difficult economy, such disruption could put virtually all of LDAC's member companies out of business.

For several years, LDAC has supported green building standards that promote use of products from certified sustainable forests. Without sustainable forests, LDAC members have no lumber products to sell. However the LEED standard is not the only accepted international standard for sustainable forests. LDAC has joined with legislators and other groups in supporting green building standards, which include the following language:

“Such provisions shall reference nationally accepted green building rating systems, including, but not limited to, the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design rating system, the Green Globes USA design program, as established by the Green Building Initiative, the National Green Building Standard, as established by the National Association of Home Builders, or an equivalent rating system approved by the State Building Inspector and the Codes and Standards Committee.”

This language is consistent with **Substitute House Bill 6284, File No. 21 AAC Adoption Of A Model Energy Code And Green Building Standards, as well as existing State Building Code Requirements.**

LDAC members will sell whatever products are required under Connecticut Statutes. However, please recognize that the vast majority of sustainable forests in North America, which meet the LEED standard, are frequently under contract to major chains of suppliers of building materials. We do not believe that it is in the public interest to create monopolies, which drive independent lumber dealers out of business.

LDAC supports green building initiatives, but requests that you amend **SB 1033** so that it is consistent with existing statutes and HB 6284, File No. 21 which included the language listed above. The existence of LDAC's members would be jeopardized if there were a policy change that didn't recognize the existence of additional sustainable forest standards other than LEED. Green Globes USA has been statutorily acknowledged as appropriate for Connecticut's State Building Code.

If SB 1033 is to be favorably reported, please amend the language as set forth above. LDAC is willing to work with any parties to help in the passage of this legislation so long as supply monopolies will not be created. The existence of our members depends on it.

This completes my testimony. Thank you for your consideration.