



Press release

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Taking a Stand for Green Building and LEED Certification

Skanska drops membership In U.S. Chamber of Commerce to protest the chamber's support of an initiative to halt progress in sustainable building.

New York, NY – Skanska USA, an international construction and development firm, announced today that it has resigned as a member of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to protest the organization's backing of a chemical industry-led initiative to effectively ban the future use of LEED for government buildings. The initiative, linked to lobbying efforts by the chemical industry related to the Shaheen-Portman Energy Efficiency Bill (S. 761), threatens to halt years of progress in energy-efficient and environmentally responsible construction.

The Chamber is supporting the American High-Performance Building Coalition (AHPBC), a lobbying organization that harbors the American Chemistry Council and opposes the implementation of a new, stronger LEED certification program (LEEDv4), which encourages transparency in reporting the chemical composition of building materials. The AHPBC is advocating for an amendment to S. 761, which will effectively ban the use of pro-innovation and voluntary LEED certification by the government. The LEED program has helped grow the green building industry to where it currently contributes more than \$554 billion to the U.S. economy and creates more than 7.9 million jobs annually.

The LEED program is the most recognized and widely used green building program globally. It is maintained and implemented by the independent U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) through a public and transparent comment and balloting process engaging its nearly 13,000 member companies. USGBC membership represents a diverse mix from the construction industry, including product manufacturers, developers, property owners, architects, engineers and more. These members voted to approve the new LEEDv4 standards on July 2 with 86 percent consensus – nearly 20 percent higher than the USGBC's required consensus of 66.7 percent.

Skanska spent the last week in discussions with the Chamber, asking its leadership to reconsider its position and remove its support for the AHPBC's position concerning LEED, which, according to Skanska, would significantly undermine the LEED program, impact more than 196,000 LEED-accredited professionals, and cripple the progress of environmentally responsible construction across the country. When talks broke down, Skanska removed its name and its funding in protest of the Chamber's decision.

“The Chamber is on the wrong side of this issue, and its support of the AHPBC is misplaced as well as misguided,” said Mike McNally, president and CEO of Skanska USA. “The U.S. Chamber of Commerce was created to advocate for pro-business policies that create jobs and support our economy. The numbers prove that LEED and green building do just that. Because a few companies don't like the current LEED program, they want to involve the government and create an entirely new system for government buildings. This is exactly the kind of redundancy and bureaucracy that we pay the Chamber to fight. Rather than support its members, who continually innovate to create new products that straddle the line between responsible and profitable, the Chamber has chosen to support a group of businesses who care more about protecting the status quo. Skanska can no longer lend its support to the Chamber when it does not do right by the community it purports to serve.

“Skanska invites the Chamber and the AHPBC to a public discussion in any forum of the issues at stake, including LEED's consensus-based voting process, the value of green building to the nation's economy, and the potential health benefits of building with materials resulting from green chemistry,” McNally added.

Skanska has constructed hundreds of green projects around the globe, including substantial environmentally responsible infrastructure in the United States. Skanska is responsible for constructing the world's first LEED-certified airport terminal, Logan International Airport's Terminal A; the first LEED Gold-certified hospital, the Providence Newberg Medical Center; and was the first company to retrofit its Empire State Building offices to receive LEED Platinum certification.

For more information about Skanska's green efforts, visit usa.skanska.com.

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