



National Institute of
BUILDING SCIENCES

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February 4, 2009

The Honorable Harry Reid
Senate Majority Leader
S-221 Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Minority Leader
S0230 Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
H-232 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Boehner
House Minority Leader
H-204 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader Reid, Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi and Leader Boehner:

The undersigned building industry organizations and companies urge you to support provisions in the economic recovery bill that will stimulate the economy through investments in the design, construction, rehabilitation and renovation of buildings and the nation's infrastructure. Specifically, we ask you to support policies in the bill that will create new and renovated federal buildings, modernized schools, and affordable housing. This will create jobs, move our nation closer to energy independence, and improve the quality of life for citizens in all 50 states.

A true economic recovery plan must include policies to stimulate the design and construction industries. These industries are responsible for nearly \$1 in every \$10 of U.S. Gross Domestic Product and employ more than 7 million Americans. They have been particularly hard-hit by the economic downturn. In the past two years, the construction industry has lost approximately 1 million jobs, and it appears the situation is only going to get worse. The AIA's Architecture Billings Index, a leading economic indicator of building industry economic health, forecasts a significant reduction in building sector activity over the next 12 months.

Federal infrastructure investments in our nation's buildings will invigorate these industries and put Americans back to work almost immediately. For example, the General Services Administration has identified more than 500 federal building projects that, if funded, could begin within 90 to 180 days. Pursuing these projects would immediately create tens of thousands of jobs for architects, engineers, geospatial professionals, contractors, electricians, plumbers, heating and air conditioning installers, carpenters, masons and painters, construction equipment operators, roofers, insulation workers, construction managers, building inspectors, and the many other building professionals who are needed to design, construct, restore and renovate buildings. Investments in other buildings such as schools, commercial buildings, healthcare facilities, state and municipal buildings and affordable housing have the potential to create hundreds of thousands of jobs nationwide.

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Investing in building construction and renovation will not simply create jobs in the short term but will also establish the foundation for sustained economic growth. Improving the energy efficiency of new and existing buildings will reduce our dependence on foreign sources of oil and move us closer to energy independence. Overhauling our nation's decaying infrastructure will improve American competitiveness. Creating 21st Century schools will protect the health and enhance the learning capabilities of the next generation of American workers.

We urge Congress to ensure that any economic recovery plan it sends to President Obama includes significant investments in the building sector.

Sincerely,



Henry L. Green, Hon. AIA
President
National Institute of Building Sciences

American Institute of Architects
AEC Science & Technology
AllForTek, Inc.
American Council of Engineering Companies
American Society of Civil Engineers
American Society of Landscape Architects
American National Standards Institute
Architecture 2030
The Association of Union Constructors
Campaign for Quality Construction
Finishing Contractors Association
Green Building Initiative
International Code Council
The International Council of Employers of Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers
Management Association for Private Photogrammetric Surveyors
Mechanical Contractors Association of America
National Electrical Manufacturers Association
National Roofing Contractors Association
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Plumbing Manufacturers Institute
Portland Cement Association
Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors' National Association
Spray Polyurethane Foam Alliance
Sustainable Buildings Industry Council
United States Green Building Council