

Energy Economy

November 2008

The New Agenda:
A New Energy Economy and 5 Million Green Jobs

With more than 500 energy and climate advisors, President-Elect Barack Obama campaigned on an aggressive and detailed plan to strengthen the economy, spur green job creation, and protect the environment.

Harnessing the amazing momentum and progress of the green building community, USGBC is now working to promote sound policies in the next administration that will stimulate a green economy, create millions of green jobs, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, advance greener, more energy-efficient buildings, and spur green infrastructure. The following policy proposals, advanced by the President-Elect during the campaign, offer particular promise for advancing green building:

- Green Building:

President-Elect Obama has proposed the expansion of federal grants to assist states and localities in building more efficient public buildings through the use of LEED. In addition, under President-Elect Obama's plan, all new federal buildings would have to be carbon-neutral by 2025. This plan also would commit all new federal buildings to a 40% improvement in efficiency within five years and would seek a 25% improvement in the efficiency of existing federal buildings within the same period.

- Building Efficiency Goals and Incentives:

President-Elect Obama has proposed a goal of carbon-neutrality for all new buildings by 2030. This will be achieved by establishing a goal of 50% greater building efficiency for new buildings and 25% greater efficiency for existing buildings over the next decade. Under the plan, the federal government would award grant funds to states and localities that implement new, energy efficient building codes, and would provide matching grants to states that promote building retrofitting through public benefits funds.

- Green Jobs and Job Training:

President-Elect Obama has proposed an investment of \$150 billion over 10 years to spur the development of renewable and other technologies, promote energy efficiency, and advance new fuel and smart electricity infrastructure. This plan would direct funding to the manufacturing sector for job training and transition programs, and would create an estimated 5 million new green jobs. Additional training programs, including a Green Jobs Corps for disadvantaged youth and a Clean Energy Corps, have been proposed to stimulate the development of a highly skilled workforce.

- Transportation and Infrastructure:

President-Elect Obama has proposed the consideration of smart growth principles in the transportation funding process, as well as renewed support for public mass transit projects. The President-Elect's proposed plan also includes the creation of a National Infrastructure Reinvestment Bank to direct \$60 billion over 10 years to infrastructure projects that could create some 2 million new jobs and \$35 billion

annually in economic activity.

With

strong federal support, the green building community will be able to accelerate its spectacular wave of growth and innovation, and help ignite a rebuilt, revived green economy. USGBC looks forward to working with the new administration to support these and other initiatives that create jobs, save money and energy, and promote the creation of sustainable buildings and communities.

A Green Revolution:
Creating Green Jobs and Economic Recovery through Green Building

USGBC

estimates that 2.5 million new green jobs could directly result from a 100% commitment to energy efficiency in our homes, schools, and offices. Indeed, McKinsey & Company reports that 85% of future incremental electricity needs in 2030 could be met through energy efficiency in buildings, appliances, and industry. For more than a decade, the U.S. Green Building Council's members have been at the forefront of the green building movement. Building by building, neighborhood by neighborhood, we are already witnessing the positive impact of green buildings on the planet, and we are making equally impressive progress in support of the other two "p's" that guide our work -- people and prosperity.

Through the deployment of new, green projects, products and technologies, the green building movement is harnessing the entrepreneurial spirit of our country, creating green jobs for the future, and providing opportunities for individuals from all walks of life to enjoy healthier, more environmentally responsible, and prosperous buildings and communities. Informed by our collective experience with more than 2,000 LEED certified facilities and nearly 16,000 LEED registered projects, we must now dedicate ourselves to restoring not only our environment, but also our economy.

New technical expertise and skills will be required to transition from our carbon-intensive economy to the green economy of the future. Large-scale investment in building efficiency and renewable energy, among other areas, can spur the creation of millions of new, green jobs -- reviving domestic industries and communities while advancing our environmental goals.