

May 5, 2009

The Honorable Ben Chandler  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1504 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Chandler:

We, the undersigned organizations, write in strong support of the 21st Century Green High-Performing Public School Facilities Act (H.R. 2187).

America's school buildings are in desperate need of repair. A study released in December 2008 by the American Federation of Teachers estimates that school-infrastructure needs exceed \$250 billion nationally. Too many of America's children attend school in overcrowded buildings with leaky roofs, faulty electrical systems, and outdated technology -- all of which compromise their ability to achieve, succeed, and develop the educational skills necessary for the workforce of the 21st Century.

The design, construction, and renovation of green, high-performing schools not only improve the learning environment for students and thereby enhance their performance; they create jobs. Green, high-performing schools promote healthy, high-achieving students who will become future advocates for green living, as this generation learns the importance of building for a sustainable future. School districts see direct benefits accrue at a level of four times the upfront cost of green improvements due to energy savings and other cost mechanisms.

In fact, according to a 2006 study by Capital E, green schools save on average \$100,000 annually from energy and water savings-- enough money to hire a full-time teacher at a time when state and local education funding is in scarce supply. Improved energy and water efficiency from the installation of green features also promises long-term savings that can replenish the funds of school districts and put money back into taxpayers' pockets.

Intrinsically, schools are an investment in our collective future, ensuring that tomorrow's leaders are prepared to meet the significant challenges our nation will face. As we work to steer our economy out of decline and toward a vibrant future, it is critical that we grasp this opportunity to ensure high-quality learning environments for our children.

For these reasons, we support H.R. 2187, the 21st Century Green High-Performing Public School Facilities Act and urge swift passage of this vital legislation.

Sincerely,

U.S. Green Building Council  
21st Century School Fund  
American Architectural Foundation  
American Association of Classified School Employees  
American Congress on Surveying and Mapping  
American Council of Engineering Companies  
American Institute of Architects

American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers  
American Society of Civil Engineers  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
Architecture 2030  
American Lighting Association  
The Campaign for Environmental Literacy  
The Collaborative for High Performance Schools  
Center for Environmental Innovation in Roofing  
Environment America  
Environmental and Energy Study Institute  
Global Green  
Green for All  
Healthy Schools Campaign  
Mechanical Contractors Association of America  
National Association of Energy Service Companies  
National Association of State Energy Officials  
National Education Association  
National School Plant Management Association  
National Society of Professional Engineers  
National Wildlife Federation  
Plumbing, Heating, Cooling Contractors Association  
Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors' National Association  
The Stella Group  
Sustainable Buildings Industry Council