

Several US Governors have voiced concern with the LEED rating system for its discrimination against wood products and against USGBC's benchmark process which seems to discriminate against wood or paper products from their state.

- **Maine Governor John Baldacci (Oct. 16, 2009 letter to USGBC)**

"I strongly urge the USGBC to ensure that its proposed Forest Certification Benchmark accommodates all of the major forest certification schemes recognized in the marketplace. At this time, we are not convinced that this is the case."

"In addition . . . we offer the observation that the LEED standard still does not give adequate recognition to the use of certified wood. We continue to encourage USGBC to fully and amply recognize in its rating systems the use of wood obtained from forests certified by independent third parties as well managed. Wood is the environmentally preferable choice of building materials for a number of reasons . . ."

- **Oregon Governor Theodore R. Kulongoski (Nov. 30, 2009 letter to USGBC)**

"The FSC program is certainly laudable, but the vast majority of Oregon's wood products industry has elected to utilize the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) certification program. Like FSC participants, their management under SFI third-party certification represents a commitment to responsible forestry that goes well beyond Oregon's comprehensive forest practice laws."

"In addition, our State has nearly 16 million acres of federal forests and 800 thousand acres of state-owned forests where environmental and social benefits are emphasized to an even greater degree. Yet wood from these lands would also appear to be ineligible for most, if not all, LEED credits, while FSC wood from foreign countries could get full credit. Importing wood rather than strongly encouraging local sources seems highly counter to the principles of sustainability."

- **Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer (Oct. 27, 2009 letter to USGBC)**

"Under the proposed benchmarks bamboo from China and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood from Russia and Brazil would be certified, whereas Montana wood would not. I am confident Montana's environmental protections exceed those of China and Russia."

- **Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty (Aug. 16, 2008 letter to USGBC)**

"The global marketplace recognizes and endorses multiple forest certification standards. With only 10 percent of forests certified globally, choosing one program over another does not encourage forest certification efforts or improve markets for certified forest products."

"By not recognizing SFI or ATFS (American Tree Farm System) certification, current LEED policy penalizes Minnesota family forestland owners by excluding timber products produced by the more than 1,800 tree farmers in our state. I find it difficult to understand how a LEED-certified building that contains bamboo from overseas would be more sustainable than one that uses wood from a certified tree farm in Minnesota."

- **Washington Governor Christine Gregoire (Oct. 2, 2008 letter to USGBC)**

"We endorse your efforts to provide all forest certification systems with the opportunity to participate in the council's program through the development of a fair and unbiased set of benchmarks."

- **California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger (statement Oct. 14, 2007 when he vetoed a bill that would have required builders to reach the LEED gold rating for commercial buildings)**

"I support the development of green building standards and share the goals of this bill. However, if implemented provisions in this bill would create a bias for certain building materials over others without a clear benefit. For instance, the use of California wood building construction materials is highly discouraged in favor of foreign grown bamboo and wheatgrass."