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The U.S. Green Building Council, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is committed to a prosperous and sustainable future through cost-efficient and energy-saving buildings. Building green is not a partisan issue. Healthy, safe and efficient buildings resonate with a very broad audience, and strike an important chord with those working to foster economic productivity and the growth of the emerging clean, green economy. The private and public sector have embraced USGBC's LEED rating system to create bottom line benefits – among other things, reducing energy and water use, and along with that, reducing operating costs. Indeed, 88 of the Fortune 100 successfully use LEED to meet their goals. Development companies and owners use LEED on new and existing buildings to add value to their portfolios.

In Ohio alone, there are over 2,424 LEED certified and registered projects that total over 225,000,000 square feet of real estate. Nearly 400 Ohio companies are members of USGBC and utilize LEED as a tool for energy and water conservation to realize both resource conservation goals and bottom-line savings that increase profits and shareholder value. Companies such as Owens Corning, Siemens, Skanska USA, Procter & Gamble, and Johnson Controls, are using LEED to save energy, money, and to create jobs.

From 2015-18 green construction will contribute \$28.76 billion to Ohio's GDP and create 338,000 jobs for Ohioans. Related to clean energy jobs, specifically, Ohio saw a 13% year over year increase from 2015-2016, the fastest growth in the Midwest, totaling over 100,000 jobs in the Buckeye State.

For these trends to continue and for Ohio to remain competitive and attract more of these jobs in the future, the state needs to adopt and support sound policies related to renewable energy, energy efficiency, and green building. Companies are increasingly reviewing these policies as an important factor in decision-making when considering relocation or building new facilities. Ohio's recent freeze of its renewable energy and energy efficiency portfolio standards have hurt future growth of these emerging sectors, with companies choosing neighboring states whose policies are more in-line with their sustainability and fiscal goals. It is time for Ohio to step forward with portfolio standards that promote further economic development not deter it. Accordingly, the U.S. Green Building Council is in strong support of thoughtful examination and reinstatement of Ohio's portfolio standards for renewable energy and energy efficiency that will continue the growth and economic development of the state.

Sincerely,

Doug Widener
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