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Building Sector Leaders Call for Steep Energy and Emissions Cuts:

SANTA FE – Twenty-four of the largest and most influential architecture, engineering, and development firms based in the U.S., which are responsible for a combined \$100 billion in building construction annually, have joined forces with Architecture 2030, a leading non-profit research organization, to call on Congress to update national building code standards to meet steep and achievable energy reduction targets.

Specifically, this group is pressing the Senate to pass the building energy reduction targets in Section 241 of the American Clean Energy Leadership Act of 2009 (S. 1462) and incorporate timelines to reach carbon-neutral buildings by 2030.

Firm leaders point out that buildings and their energy use account for approximately half of the energy and greenhouse gas emissions and 75 percent of electricity consumption in the United States, and that if the U.S. is to have any hope of getting its energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions under control, it must begin seriously addressing its Building Sector.

According to these firms, including HKS Architects, Perkins+Will, ARUP, and HOK, the building energy code targets in Section 241 are both readily achievable and cost effective, and passage will give the architecture, engineering, and building community the support they need to begin transforming the built environment. “We – the Building Sector community – are on the front lines on this one. We have a big job ahead of us and we need Congress to begin putting into place the code regulations and support necessary to help us get the job done,” said Ralph Hawkins, Chairman and CEO of HKS Architects.

These firms are speaking from experience. They are all adopters and implementers of the 2030 Challenge, which was issued to the architecture and planning community by Architecture 2030 in January 2006.

The energy reduction targets of the widely adopted 2030 Challenge are the basis for the targets in the Senate bill and the targets and timelines of the Waxman-Markey bill passed in the House (HR 2454, Section 201). The Challenge calls for a 50% energy reduction in all new and renovated buildings today, incrementally increasing to carbon-neutral in 2030. The Challenge enjoys widespread national bi-partisan support and has been adopted by the American Institute of Architects, U.S. Conference of Mayors, National Association of Counties, National Governors Association, and numerous professional and industry organizations, design firms, and cities, counties, and states.

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These 24 firms are part of a powerful and burgeoning movement within the business community to push hard for changes that address energy consumption and climate change while opening new markets. On September 22, 2009, five hundred corporate executives from firms in about 50 countries issued the “Copenhagen Communique”, calling for climate negotiators to finalize a new international climate treaty by the end of the year.

According to Edward Mazria, Executive Director of Architecture 2030, “in order for the U.S. to take an effective leadership role on energy and climate change, we must address our Building Sector, and Senate building energy code legislation coupled with the 2030 Challenge timelines, will make that possible.”

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Architecture 2030 is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit research organization working to achieve a dramatic reduction in the energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions of buildings by changing the way they are designed and constructed, and by galvanizing and collaborating with key players in the Building Sector. In 2006, Architecture 2030 developed and issued the widely adopted 2030 Challenge and works with adopters to meet the Challenge’s energy reduction targets. www.architecture2030.org

EXTERNAL LINKS / ATTACHMENTS

For a .pdf version of this press release: http://www.architecture2030.org/downloads/Press_Release_092809.pdf

Online version: http://www.architecture2030.org/news/release_092809.html

For a complete list of supporting firms: http://www.architecture2030.org/downloads/signingfirms_092809.pdf

Letters to the U.S. Senate: http://www.architecture2030.org/downloads/senateletters_092809.pdf