PRESS RELEASE

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USGBC Launches Toolkit to Help State Legislators Advance Green Schools Agenda

Supports state lawmakers working hard to legislate smart and effective policy

July 29, 2010 (Louisville, Ky.) – *Greening Our Schools: A State Legislator's Guide to Best Policy Practices* debuted this week at the National Conference of State Legislatures annual Legislative Summit. Developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), this first-of-its-kind toolkit on green schools is a comprehensive guide for state lawmakers who are developing policy solutions that improve the health, productivity, efficiency, and fiscal responsibility of schools in their state. The toolkit is a product of USGBCs *50 for 50 Green Schools Caucus Initiative* and sponsored by the Turner Foundation.

"This toolkit will be instrumental in helping us achieve our goal of a green school for all children within this generation," said Illinois State Representative Karen May (D-Highland Park), Chair of the National Advisory Council for the *50 for 50 Green Schools Caucus Initiative,* at an event co-hosted this week by USGBC and the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators. She praised the work of the state legislators who participated in the development of the toolkit.

"Green schools caucuses in 32 state capitals across the country are driving transformational policy that is being felt at the heart of communities across the nation," said Roger Limoges, Chief of Staff, USGBC. USGBCs *50 for 50* program was launched in October of 2008 to draw focus and attention in state legislatures to the very real and powerful benefits of healthy, productive and efficient school buildings.

"Building and retrofitting our schools so that they are healthy, safe and efficient is not only the right thing to do; it's the fiscally smart thing to do and it's putting money back into the classroom," said Kentucky Representative Jim DeCesare (R-Bowling Green), Vice Chair of the *50 for 50* programs National Advisory Council. Affirming the importance of healthy, productive green schools that are also energy efficient, Kentucky House Majority Leader Rocky Adkins (D-Elliott) remarked, "A big part of meeting future energy demand is through initiatives like this."

Providing local context to the national dialogue on green schools, Rep. DeCesare added that Kentucky "has been a national leader on green schools," referring to Kentucky's laudable efforts to both improve energy efficiency in their schools and spread the message about the multiple benefits of green schools.

Together with Rep. DeCesare, Kentucky Representative Mary Lou Marzian (D-Louisville) co-chairs the Green Schools Caucus in the Kentucky General Assembly. It provides a forum for information and action on green schools in the state legislature. Rep. Marzian, along with Rep. DeCesare and Majority Leader Adkins, co-sponsored a 2010 joint resolution in support of green schools and established the Green Schools Caucus in the Kentucky General Assembly.

Rep. Marzian added that "this was possible thanks to the hard-working volunteers of the Kentucky Chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council who have really poured their time and energy into making this caucus and this program a big success for us." Rep. Marzian acknowledged Cliff Ashburner, Chair of the USGBC Kentucky Chapter, who was also present.

Chairing the *50 for 50* program efforts in the Oregon state Legislature, Representative Jules Bailey (D-Portland) remarked, "This is an answer for our economic challenges in addition to our environmental and education challenges." After all, he said, "Healthy, high-performance schools mean healthy, high-performance kids."

The launch of the toolkit, and its peer-reviewed legislative menu of options for advancing a green schools agenda, supports state lawmakers that are working hard to develop and implement smart and effective policy in their states. "School buildings are the cornerstone of any and every community, and green school buildings are central to our nationwide commitment to improve education, maximize efficiency, and lay the strong foundations of the new green economy," added Rep. May.

For more information on the *Greening Our Schools* toolkit, or to request a copy, please contact Nathaniel Allen at nallen@usgbc.org.

For more information on green schools, visit: www.greenschoolbuildings.org.

About the U.S. Green Building Council
The USGBC community is transforming the way we build, design and operate our buildings for healthier places that save precious resources for people to live, work, learn and play in. UGSBC is helping create buildings and communities that regenerate and sustain the health and vitality of all life within a generation. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the Council is the driving force of the green building industry, which is projected to contribute $554 billion to the U.S. gross domestic product by 2013. USGBC leads a diverse constituency of builders and environmentalists, corporations and nonprofit organizations, elected officials, concerned citizens, teachers and students. The USGBC community comprises 80 local chapters, 17,000 member companies and organizations, and more than 150,000 individuals who have earned LEED Professional Credentials. Visit www.usgbc.org for more information.

About the *50 for 50 Green Schools Caucus Initiative*: http://www.greenschoolbuildings.org/50for50

About the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators:
The National Caucus of Environmental Legislators (NCEL) was organized in 1996 for the purpose of providing environmentally progressive legislators with an opportunity to coordinate their activities with respect to national legislative organizations, and to share ideas both on affirmative and negative environmental issues. Visit www.ncel.net for more information.