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Sen. Chap Petersen's Green Public Buildings Act passes unanimously in Senate

Richmond, Virginia – February 16, 2010 – Sen. Chap Petersen's Green Public Buildings Act, Senate Bill 109, received unanimous approval (40 – 0) in the Virginia Senate on Tuesday.

The Green Public Buildings Act, one piece of Petersen's larger energy conservation plan, mandates all new construction of state buildings greater than 5,000 gross square feet in size or new renovations of state buildings where the cost of reconstruction exceeds 50 percent of the building's value adhere to LEED or Green Globes standards.

"It codifies the policy previously established by Governor Kaine to use LEED Silver as the standard for building state government buildings in Virginia. It also permits an opt-out in those situations where the cost is prohibitive," said Petersen.

Sen. Petersen has stated that high-efficient state buildings will preserve the environment while saving taxpayer dollars.

Sue Rowland of Virginia's four U.S. Green Building Council chapters has confirmed that many private sector establishments, such as the LEED-certified building operated by VDOT where Petersen attended an October Energy Efficiency Subcommittee meeting in Fredericksburg, are already in compliance with SB 109's building standards.

"The Fredericksburg building utilizes natural light and energy-efficient materials to cut down utility costs. This is the model of the future. The Commonwealth should be encouraging this standard of doing business by being a leader," added Petersen.

Senate Bill 109 is endorsed by conservation groups such as the Virginia's League of Conservation Voters, Virginia Interfaith Power & Light, and the state's four U.S. Green Building Council chapters, which includes the National Capital Region Chapter.

The Virginia House of Delegates will vote on SB 109 in the coming weeks.

Senator Chap Petersen represents Virginia's 34th State Senate district, which includes Fairfax City and much of Fairfax County. He is member of the Senate Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources Committee.

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