



# HIGH-PERFORMANCE BUILDING CONGRESSIONAL CAUCUS COALITION

--www.HPBCCC.org--

## VIRTUAL CONGRESSIONAL VISITS DAY

### FACT SHEET

The **High-Performance Building Caucus of the U.S. Congress** was formed to heighten awareness and inform policymakers about the major impact buildings have on our health, safety and welfare and the opportunities to design, construct and operate high-performance buildings that reflect our concern for these impacts. Fundamental to these concerns include protecting life and property, developing novel building technologies, facilitating and enhancing U.S. economic competitiveness, increasing energy efficiency in the built-environment, assuring buildings have minimal climate change impacts and are able to respond to changes in the environment, and supporting the development of private sector standards, codes and guidelines that address these concerns.

The High-Performance Buildings Congressional Caucus Coalition works with the Congressional Caucus to promote and showcase best practices in building design and focus on issues reflecting all aspects of high-performance buildings including:

Accessibility	Historic Preservation
Aesthetics	Productivity
Cost-Effectiveness	Safety and Security
Functionality	Sustainability

### What is a High-Performance Building?

*'High-performance building' means a building that integrates and optimizes on a life cycle basis all major high performance attributes, including energy conservation, environment, safety, security, durability, accessibility, cost-benefit, productivity, sustainability, functionality, and operational considerations.*

-Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 §401 (PL 110-140)

### Why are High-Performance Buildings Important?

- **Economic recovery and job creation**
  - The design and construction of buildings account for over 10 percent of the nations' GDP and employs an estimated 10 million people.
  - High-performance buildings support the development of high-technology products that can help keep U.S. research and development at the forefront.
  - Many building sector related jobs cannot be outsourced.
- **Energy and the Environment**
  - Our homes, offices, schools, and other buildings consume 40% of the primary energy and 70% of the electricity in the U.S. annually.
  - Buildings consume about 12% of the nation's potable water.
  - Building construction and related infrastructure consume approximately 60% of all raw materials used in the U.S. economy.



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- Buildings account for 39% of U.S. CO2 emissions annually—approximately equal to the combined carbon emissions of Japan, France, and the United Kingdom.
- Building sector organizations and their members are leading the way in development of technologies, practices, training, and tools to reduce the impact of buildings on our environment.
- **Homeland Security and Disaster Mitigation**
  - Residential and commercial building design, construction, and operations should effectively guard against natural and human caused events and disasters (fire, water, wind, noise, crime, and terrorism).
- **Education**
  - Americans spend about 90% of their time indoors, with children spending much of that time in our schools.
  - A well designed and constructed school can help facilitate learning.
  - The building sciences provide an excellent opportunity to engage students in a variety of subjects including technical education, science, engineering, and design.
- **Health Care**
  - Poor indoor environmental quality is detrimental to the health of all Americans, especially our children and elderly. Studies have shown that the design and construction of health care facilities can impact the recovery of patients.
- **Infrastructure**
  - Roads, bridges, and public transportation are designed to bring people to buildings. A thoughtful approach recognizing the interaction between infrastructure and buildings is necessary. High performance infrastructure systems (transportation, power, communications, water and waste) are essential to achieving high performance buildings.

### **What is a Congressional caucus?**

A caucus is a way for Members of Congress to indicate their support for a common issue and to discuss opportunities to advance that issue through legislation, education briefings, and other means. A caucus may contain members from just one political party or may be bi-partisan and is only open to Members of Congress. The High-Performance Building Caucus is bi-partisan and is led by Representative Russ Carnahan (D-MO) and Representative Judy Biggert (R-IL). Current Caucus members can be found here [[/camembers.php](#)].

### **What is the Caucus Coalition?**

The Caucus Coalition is a gathering of private sector organizations that support the work of the caucus. This includes identification of experts on particular issues facing Congress, development of educational briefings, and providing private sector input to policymakers. Current members of the Coalition can be found here [[/coal.php](#)].



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### **Why Should Representatives Join the High-Performance Building Caucus?**

- The Caucus provides access to experts from across the building industry to provide information on critical issues.
- Caucus membership illustrates a Representative's recognition that high-performance buildings are important in their community and the future of the nation.

### **Why Should it Matter to You?**

As Congress considers issues affecting the built environment and your profession—including energy policy, climate change legislation, the economy, and jobs—it is important that they have access to the experts on the ground that can inform their policy decisions. The Caucus provides an opportunity to engage policymakers in issues that affect you, your community, and your industry—if your interests are not represented, Congressional action could adversely impact you.