

AIA New York Chapter

The Founding Chapter of
The American Institute of Architects



June 20, 2005

Speaker Gifford Miller
The City Council of New York
City Hall
New York, New York, 10007

Dear Speaker Miller:

On behalf of the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, representing 4,000 architect and public members in New York City, we would like to congratulate the City Council on developing a progressive law to promote new green standards for City buildings and place New York among the leading cities in the nation for high-performance building. Similar to Governor Pataki's New York State Green Building Tax Credit, Local Law 324 on Green Building Standards for city-owned and financed buildings will help create the framework to shift towards environmentally progressive building technologies and integrated energy-efficient design in the city.

This law has the opportunity to go beyond the NYS Green Building Tax Credit by improving a great number of buildings in New York City, and to transform the city's building industry into the 21st Century with higher environmental standards of design and construction. In addition, the influence will extend far beyond the buildings financed by the City and will have a significant impact on the entire building industry and infrastructure in the region for four reasons:

1. **National Leadership** – This initiative will further define New York City as a leader that recognizes the value of high-performance buildings to protect the health and welfare of municipal employees and citizens, and provide greater financial accountability for the use of taxpayer's money. New York will join other forward thinking cities, such as Boulder, Colorado; Austin, Texas; Chicago, Illinois; and Portland, Oregon.
2. **Increase Employment Opportunities** – By setting a higher standard for the construction industry, the City Council is investing in the creation of new jobs in the region, fostering a skilled, highly trained workforce. High-performance buildings require systems commissioning, the demand for energy efficient and healthy products will create new opportunities for entrepreneurs, and the building certification process will promote opportunities in the design profession.

3. **Reduced Energy Consumption** –This law will help to reduce overall energy consumption in the City and region over time, thus reducing the demand for new power production facilities that have met with strong community opposition, and linked with public health issues such as asthma. In addition, lower energy consumption will reduce operating costs for the city government allowing these funds to be reallocated to other fundamental city services.
4. **Reduced Water Consumption and Storm Water Discharge** – The potable water of New York is a precious and much touted resource in the City. This law will work to preserve that resource by conservation. By reducing storm water and partially treated sewage discharges, we will protect the City's drinking water and preserve our beautiful rivers and shoreline for recreation.

The AIA New York Chapter supports the basic principles proposed in the revised legislation and concur this legislation is moving the City's building industry in the right direction. However, we believe the legislation requires more time to fully examine and comprehend its specific ramifications. An example of areas that we feel need to be examined are impact on renovations and leased space. We propose to conduct a more concentrated analysis of the economic and practical impact on the City's capital program and implementation strategies.

Sincerely,

Susan Chin, FAIA
President, AIA New York Chapter

Chris Garvin, AIA, LEED Accredited Professional
Co-Chair AIA NY Chapter Committee on the Environment

Craig Graber, Assoc. AIA, LEED Accredited Professional
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cc: Hon. Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg
Hon. Madeline T. Provenzano, Chair, Housing & Buildings Committee
Members of the City Council