

Facts about SCR25



LEED is Good for Ohio. Ohio is #1 in the U.S. in green school construction thanks to state policy for new public school buildings to earn minimum LEED silver certification. Ohio's 100+ LEED schools:

- Are designed to be 35% more energy efficient and use 37% less water than buildings built to previous standards (prudent use of taxpayer dollars);
- Obtain 35% of material from regional sources (benefit Ohio's economy); and,
- Have diverted 188,114 tons of construction waste from landfills (reduce waste).

Anti-Competitive Faction Seeks to Ban LEED. A small but well-funded and connected faction of vinyl, plastic, chemical, and other carbon-intensive industries argue that the latest evolution of LEED, called "v4," puts them at a competitive disadvantage by encouraging disclosure of materials in their products. So they influenced the Ohio Senate to pass Senate Concurrent Resolution 25 ("SCR25"), urging:

"That the LEED v4 green building rating system no longer be used by Ohio's state agencies and government entities..."

Plenty of major corporations with headquarters or operations in Ohio embrace LEED (e.g., Owens Corning, Nucor, Johnson Controls, Siemens, etc.). So why is this clique so afraid of disclosing what is in their products?

"In Ohio, Owens Corning employs over 2,200 and Ohio is home to nearly 1,900 retirees and 11 facilities, including the first fiberglass insulation plant in the world in Newark. Owens Corning has experienced positive advantages to our business of green and high performance building and we are opposed to Senate Concurrent Resolution 25."

Jay Murdoch, Director of Government and Public Affairs, Owens Corning

Banning LEED is Bad for Ohio. United in opposition to SCR25 is a diverse coalition of students, parents, teachers, administrators, multinational corporations, small businesses, architects, engineers, veterans, nonprofits, and concerned citizens. While acknowledging that LEED is not perfect, these stakeholders are united in the belief that LEED is the best third-party verified high performance building rating system available. Why would Ohio abandon LEED without any independent analysis, and without identifying any better alternative?

"To ban LEED v4 would be a ban on LEED altogether. It would be saying to the public, 'No, we don't want the best buildings for our kids anymore.' It would be an incredible disservice to our students and our constituents to take away such a strong, effective, and proven program."

—Dan Roberts, Retired Superintendent, Miami-Trace School District

Facts about LEED v4

Claim: Even if LEED v4 is banned, buildings can still be built using previous LEED standards.

Fact: Banning LEED v4 means banning LEED altogether.

Currently, project teams desiring LEED certifications have the option to register and use either the portfolio of LEED 2009 rating systems, OR the LEED v4 systems. However after June of next year, just 15 months away, there will no longer be an option to choose the current 2009 systems.

Claim: USGBC does not use a consensus-based process to develop standards.

Fact: An independent, multi-year study commissioned by the United States General Services Administration and prepared by division of Battelle, confirms that LEED is indeed a “consensus” standard.

In fact, LEED v4 was approved only after an unprecedented six comment periods resulting in over 22,000 public comments, with 86% of overall membership in favor of adoption, including majority approval from each major stakeholder group (89% of producers/contractors/builders, 90% of users, and 77% in the general interest category of utilities, manufacturers and organizations).

Table ES.8 Review questions with different certification system responses

Review Question	Green Globes	LEED	Living Building Challenge
Independence: Is there a documented appeal process?	●	●	○
Verification: Do the assessors/auditors verify the information onsite?	●	○	●
Transparency: Are there methods to collect and address public comments?	●	●	○
Transparency: Are the changes documented and accessible by the public?	●	●	○
Consensus: Was the certification system developed using a consensus-based approach?	●	●	○
Consensus: Are credits pilot tested before publication	○	●	○
Consensus: Are there third-party reviewers/moderators of the process?	●	●	○
Maturity: Is there a requirement for post occupancy data collection once a building has been certified?	○	●	●
Maturity: Is there a mechanism to transfer the certification of a new building to an existing building over time?	○	○	●
Maturity: What is the frequency of changes?	●	●	○
Usability: Does the certification system have performance-based criteria?	○	○	●

See Table 2-3 for a more complete description of these criteria

“If I were designing a project to be certified under LEED V4, I would be free to choose the best available products to fit the owner’s needs and budget. If vinyl flooring and windows are the best option to meet the owner’s needs then that is what we specify... There is no mandate or prohibition for any product. Installing specific products does not prevent a building from achieving LEED certification.”

— Michael Huff, Architect, Ruetschle Architects

Claim: LEED v4 will eliminate certain materials from LEED buildings.

Fact: There is no list of materials that are banned from LEED projects.

Early draft credits proposed a variety of avoidance or chemicals of concern restrictions, but these were all completely removed during the open and transparent LEED standards development process. This was due to great extent by the USGBC desire to implement only a rating system that is feasible, does not penalize industries, and still pushes the marketplace to innovate and solve tough problems.

Instead, there are 1-2 optional points—out of 110—available for documenting what ingredients are contained in 20 building products—out of the hundreds of products in an entire project. This can be as simple as providing the Material Safety Data Sheets that have already been required and produced for decades for products used in construction, operations, cleaning, and similar activities to disclose potential human health hazards and recommend proper handling, transport, and use.

LEED continually creates space for innovation, competition and growth of so many American industries. Cleveland’s own Sherwin-Williams is a great example of a company that found an opportunity for innovation available in LEED’s voluntary credits and has emerged as a market leader in the production of low-emitting paints and coatings.

Claim: LEED v4 will hurt Ohio jobs.

Fact: LEED v4 continues to promote use of regionally-sourced materials to support the local economy.

LEED has been great for Ohio. In addition to energy and water savings, and diversion of waste from landfills, Ohio’s LEED schools have obtained 35% of material from regional sources, benefitting the local economy while curbing transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions.

"I know that the language in LEED v4 will not cause me to avoid any specific chemicals or materials that I believe are well suited for the project I am working on. LEED v4, like previous versions of LEED, does, however, still encourage the use of locally sourced and manufactured materials. Most of the LEED projects that I have worked on have been able to document that roughly 30% of the materials used in the construction of the building were produced regionally. This is a trend I expect to continue, resulting in the maintenance or even addition of Ohio jobs."

—Allison McKenzie, Architect, SHP

Claim: Adopting green building standards that have American National Standards Institute (ANSI) approval will level the playing field for all green building rating systems. USGBC could take LEED through the full ANSI consensus process at any time and meet the requirement of the resolution.

Fact: ANSI has not approved any current green building standards, effectively leaving Ohio with no updated green building standards to choose from with LEED off the table. In addition, ANSI's "Essential Requirements" include non-duplication of existing standards so LEED could not compete.

The 2010 version of Green Globes, an alternative third-party green rating system, went through the ANSI process and was determined to be an ANSI rating system (GBI/ANSI 01-2010). However, the newer 2013 Green Globes rating tool has not been taken through the ANSI standards process and cannot be until 2015 at the mandated review interval. Thus, requiring Ohio to use only an ANSI standard leaves the state with a monopoly on one out-dated system and no alternatives.

What's the Solution?

We want standards that are in the best interest of the state—standards that promote energy efficient, healthy buildings for the public, support jobs, and make efficient use of taxpayer dollars. To do so, we need to allow our public servants to choose the tools that make the most sense to help them design and construct green facilities: we need to keep LEED in their toolbox.

"The LEED consulting work my company does has been a key contributor to tripling our mechanical, electrical and plumbing engineering staff in Ohio between 2008 and the end of 2013...notice those were recession years for our industry, but green building fueled growth in this area of our business even then. Sustainable buildings make clear sense from an economic, social and environmental standpoint. Government leadership and policy initiatives should encourage, not discourage, continued green building in Ohio and leave all sustainable design tools, including LEED, on the table for our owners, architects, engineers and building operators."

— Nadja Turek, Director of Sustainable Design Services, Woolpert, Inc.

**Join us in the fight to keep Ohio's built environment healthy, prosperous, and sustainable:
Call your Representative today and ask them to vote NO on SCR25.**

For more information, visit www.usgbcOhio.org/scr25.