United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 12, 2005

Green Communities:
Building Location-Efficient, Healthy and Energy-Conserving Homes

Tuesday, July 26, 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.
United States Capitol Building, Room SC-6

Dear Colleague:

We invite you and your staff to attend a policy briefing on "green communities" that will discuss how the design and construction of communities can advance energy efficiency goals, reduce costs, achieve environmental objectives, and promote healthy living. The briefing, sponsored by The Enterprise Foundation, will take place on **Tuesday, July 26 at 2:00 p.m.** in the **United States Capitol Building, Room SC-6.**

Building green communities through resource-efficient land use planning and building design is revolutionizing the way housing is sited and built. In a study conducted by the U.S. Green Building Council, an up-front investment of two percent in green design results in an average life cycle savings of 20 percent of total construction costs, more than ten times the initial investment. For lower income households, resource-efficient design is especially important as nearly 20 percent of a low-income family's earnings are consumed by energy costs and nearly 40 percent by transportation costs.

At this briefing, Stockton Williams of The Enterprise Foundation and Kaid Benfield of the Natural Resources Defense Council will explain why a premier national affordable housing provider and a leading national environmental group have joined forces to create the nation's largest and most far-reaching green development program. The new national Green Communities Initiative is a five-year, $555 million initiative that aims to create more than 8,500 rental and for-sale green homes for low-income Americans. Other panelists include Jim Logue, regional president of the Great Lakes Capital Fund, who will discuss how the newly-launched Michigan Green Communities Initiative will provide incentives to encourage developers to build green affordable housing across the state. Lastly, Carol Werner, Executive Director of the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI), will discuss the nexus between energy and smart growth.

For more information, please call Alice Yates in Senator Levin's office at x4-2683 or Angela Boyd at The Enterprise Foundation, 202-842-9190 ext. 20. We hope that you or your staff can attend, and we look forward to seeing you there.

Sincerely,

James Jeffords
Co-Chair,
Senate Smart Growth Task Force

Carl Levin
Co-Chair,
Senate Smart Growth Task Force