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## Project Highlight

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**Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Bethesda, Md.:** This project achieved LEED Gold certification in the LEED for New Construction ratings system—an impressive feat for a state-of-the-art medical facility that operates around the clock and uses high-energy medical equipment. On July 20, the project was named Project of the Year—New Construction by the U.S. Green Building Council National Capital Region Chapter.

Under a design-build contract awarded by the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Clark/Balfour Beatty, A Joint Venture, created the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center on the campus of the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md. Design efforts were led by HKS Architects, executive architect; Wingler Sharp, architectural renovation and construction design; and Hartman-Cox Architects, historic preservation. Design-build partners integral to achieving LEED certification include Southland Industries (mechanical) and M.C. Dean (electrical).

The \$826 million project included new construction as well as expansions and renovations to existing hospital facilities. The Walter Reed National Military Medical Center was created through the Base Realignment and Closure Act of 2005. The Navy required LEED Silver for this project, but the design-build team voluntarily went beyond that, earning Gold by achieving 43 points, 30 percent more than required for Silver. *(Contributed by Eric Fulton, Clark Construction Group, LLC and Karen Cotton, EIT, LEED AP, Balfour Beatty Construction).*

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## House of Representatives Seeks to Curtail LEED Funding

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On May 27, 2011, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 1540, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012, which contains two key provisions in Section 2831 related to green design of military construction. The House's actions appear to reflect a growing trend to reduce government spending by limiting the ability of



*National Military Medical Center, Bethesda, Md.*

federal construction projects to achieve energy-efficient building certifications.

First, Section 2831 requires that, by the end of 2012, the Department of Defense (DoD) must submit a report on the energy efficiency standards utilized by the DoD for military construction. This report must include a cost-benefit analysis for adopting ASHRAE Standard 189.1 versus Standard 90.1 for the construction and renovation of buildings and structures, details of the energy-efficient improvements achieved and long-term payback from adoption of ASHRAE Standard 189.1, and cost-benefit and return on investment analyses for DoD funds expended to achieve LEED Gold or Platinum certification. Finally, the report must include a DoD policy for the pursuit of energy-efficient standards and sustainable design for military construction based upon the aforementioned cost-benefit and demonstrated payback analyses.

Second, Section 2831 prohibits the use of DoD funds for 2012 towards achievement of LEED Gold or Platinum certifications, unless the Secretary of Defense submits a detailed cost-benefit analysis for the project. While the project may also be exempted if there is no additional cost for achieving the certification, because achievement of LEED Gold or Platinum certification requires fees be paid to the US Green Building Counsel, this provision may effectively bar DoD construction projects from being able to obtain LEED Gold or Platinum certification for those projects on which the Secretary does not perform and provide the required analyses. The bill has been with the Senate Committee on Armed Services since June 6, 2011

and it will be interesting to see whether and how the Senate modifies Section 2831. *(Contributed by Robert J. Dietz, Esq., LEED GA, Briglia McLaughlin, PLLC).*

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