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CANADIAN CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY ADVOCATES FOR FAIR CONSTRUCTION PRACTICES AT CONVERGE 2013

November 4, 2013
The Canadian construction industry came together on October 15 & 16, 2013 at the Westin Bayshore in Vancouver, BC for CONVERGE 2013 – a first of its kind, national conference with a focus on fair and transparent construction practices – to debate key issues impacting the industry, collaborate and share best practices and resources, discuss green building trends, and to be inspired by innovation and new technologies that the industry is working on.

The meeting brought together leaders from 28 members of the National Coalition for Fair Construction Practices, comprising national and provincial industry associations, corporations and unions.

The central theme of the conference was the need for the primary building material industries – Steel, Wood and Concrete - to work together and agree on common science-based, performance oriented approaches to promoting their building materials, and to develop a standardized and transparent way (using metrics such as Life Cycle Assessments, Environmental Product Declarations, and other such as quantifiable indicators) to report on environmental and sustainability impacts of their products.

The event was packed with engaging and informative presentations from independent consultants, architects, engineers, industry associations, research companies and academia that all agreed on the need for enhanced dialogue and collaboration between industry stakeholders to better serve our customers.

The Coalition members also expressed their serious concerns with the activities of the Wood industry, who are implementing a national lobbying campaign with provincial governments to enact legislation, commonly known as the “Wood First Act”, that would mandate the use of Wood over other building materials for public projects and bypass the system of checks and balances provided through our building codes.

Ed Whalen, President of the Canadian Institute of Steel Construction (CISC), who presented at the conference as a part of a panel discussion, remarked “We are here to promote a transparent, fair and competitive construction marketplace that is driven by innovation, sustainability and the highest performance and quality standards. The wood industry cares about their own survival versus sustainability. I see it as greed over public safety. They want legislation versus free choice. They want legislation as opposed to the rigour and safety of the building code process. This will hurt the entire construction industry.”

Tareq Ali, Director of Marketing at the Canadian Institute of Steel Construction (CISC) remarked on the importance of this event: “Converge is about the entire construction industry coming together to share and brainstorm ways in which we can more effectively work together to better inform, inspire and serve our customers and end users. The Wood industry’s aggressive lobbying efforts to enact legislation that forces consultants to use their products and bypass our building codes limits competition, stifles innovation, strips away creativity and choice from the design and consulting community, and ultimately threatens public safety.”
For more information visit: Converge2013forum.com

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