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**ANSI Workshop: Toward Product Standards for  
Sustainability**  
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Good morning, everyone.

My name is Joe Bhatia, and I am president and CEO of the American National Standards Institute.

It is my pleasure to be here today, and I would like to thank you all for joining us for ANSI's workshop toward product standards for sustainability.

Sustainability has been an issue of concern for many years. As far back as the nineteen thirties, economists were discussing how to manage the use of non-renewable resources as American businesses expanded during the Industrial Revolution.

The speed and magnitude of industrial development around the world ever since has created economic opportunity in ways those experts probably could not have imagined 70 years ago. But it has also created an unprecedented demand for resources.

Today, increased global awareness and education have given us great insight into the importance of sustainability. With more and more studies on the effects of modern practices and technologies at our disposal, we know that sustainability is something that must be addressed now to protect the world for ourselves and our future generations.

Consumers are expressing a desire for sustainable products, as well.

Consumer interest in green products is higher than ever. In 2007, the percent of consumer purchases based on "greenness" tripled. This marks the largest ever recorded shift in consumer behavior.<sup>1</sup>

In fact, the popularity of eco-friendly, organic, and fair trade products has increased each year for the past five years.<sup>2</sup> Shoppers are realizing that there is an environmental impact associated with each of the products that they buy, and they are making purchasing decisions based on that knowledge.

With figures like these, it is clear that the time has come for us to discuss solutions for the sustainable manufacture, distribution, and disposal of goods. Organizations nationwide –

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<sup>1</sup> "True Green Population Tripled Over 16 Months." Mintel Green Living Market Research Report, February 2008.

<sup>2</sup> "Sustainability: CPG Marketing in a Green World." IRI Times and Trends Report, March 2009.

and worldwide – are striving to meet the needs and demands of consumers without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.<sup>3</sup>

Collectively, we face a big challenge. But standards can help.

For those of you who may not be familiar with ANSI, the Institute was founded 90 years ago by five professional societies and three federal agencies. These groups came together because they saw the need for an organization that could take on the difficult issues that fell in the gray area between regulatory mandates and private sector initiatives.

From its very inception, ANSI has coordinated a public-private partnership to address and help resolve the critical issues that face the nation . . . and the planet.

Today, ANSI works to enhance U.S. global competitiveness and the American quality of life by promoting, facilitating, and safeguarding the integrity of the voluntary standardization and conformity assessment system.

Over the past nine decades, we have seen that the most effective solutions come about through a thoughtful, open, and consensus-based process. These are the very principles that the U.S. voluntary standardization system is based on . . . and they are the same principles that have been applied to the organization and management of this workshop.

This event is intended to provide a neutral venue where all interested stakeholders can engage in discussions that will support and facilitate the timely development, promulgation, and use of standards to address sustainability issues related to products.

You only need to look around you to see that there is a very high level of interest in this topic. We have a full house here in person, and many more participants by teleconference and webinar.

We have an interesting lineup for you today – a broad array of experts whose perspectives I think we will all find informative.

This morning, we will hear from Dr. Mary McKiel of the U.S. EPA on their particular interests and experiences related to standards for sustainability.

We'll also hear a brief overview of the U.S. standards and conformity assessment system from my colleagues at ANSI, Fran Schrotter and Lane Hallenbeck.

And Ms. Urvashi Rangan, of the Consumers Union and Consumer Reports, will deliver the morning's keynote address from a purchaser's perspective.

Next, we will have a facilitated discussion with a number of standards developing organizations currently working to develop standards and criteria that address

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<sup>3</sup> "Brundtland definition" from the 1987 Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development

sustainability. And over lunch, we will hear the industry perspective on the role of standards in the sustainable products movement.

Finally, we will ask you to participate in breakout sessions that address some of the ideas and questions that you heard over the course of the day.

Tomorrow, we'll hear from a panel of retailers giving their perspectives on the sustainable products movement and the role of standards. Following that panel, we will discuss common trends and themes that emerged from a review of the breakout group reports and have a conversation about priorities and potential next steps.

Before we begin today's discussions, I would like to express my thanks first and foremost to the U.S. EPA for their support of this Workshop. In particular, Alison Kinn-Bennett and Clare Lindsay are to be commended for their dedication to this effort. Thanks too to all those who helped develop our agenda for the next two days, and to the Keystone Center for their assistance as facilitators.

And finally, our sincere thanks to the sponsors of our refreshments: the Greenguard Environmental Institute, the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials, ASTM International, the Construction Specifications Institute, the Green Electronics Council/EPEAT, and NSF International.

Their generous contributions have made food and beverage service at today and tomorrow's events possible.

And my thanks to all of you for your attention. I hope everyone finds this two day Workshop to be informative and enlightening. I look forward to working with you and to hearing each of your unique perspectives on this critical topic.