

Grantees Selected for the Weatherization Innovation Pilot Program

\$30 million in funding from the Weatherization Assistance Program's annual appropriation will support 16 pilot projects that will demonstrate innovative approaches to weatherizing low-income homes across the country

The below awards are grouped by innovation category:

Financing Approaches

District of Columbia: Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future (SAHF), a network of social enterprise non-profit multifamily building owners, has been selected to receive nearly \$2.6 million to coordinate an energy performance contracting program to improve the energy efficiency of 2,500 housing units in 40 to 50 eligible properties. A loan loss reserve will be set up with \$1.25 million so that nearly \$8 million in private loans can be made to the property owners to make energy saving upgrades. SAHF will also emphasize resident education and training, as well as maintenance staff training to provide further savings.

Nebraska: Energy Pioneer Solutions (EPS), a women-owned small business in Hastings, which provides energy efficiency audit and retrofit services, has been selected to receive over \$800,000 to streamline weatherization services for low-income families and use an improved audit tool. EPS plans to offer loans to customers for half the value of the weatherization project, and use on-bill financing through the local utility to collect the payments.

New York: Community Environmental Center (CEC), based in Long Island, has been selected to receive \$3 million to focus on the weatherization of 1,400 low-rise multifamily housing units using a targeted, block-by-block approach in partnership with Sustainable South Bronx and the Urban Homesteading Assistance Board. CEC will also work with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority to implement a system of on-bill financing.

Utah: Utah's Department of Community and Economic Development, based in Salt Lake City, has been selected to receive \$850,000 to create a performance-based revolving loan program to demonstrate the feasibility of using low-interest loans as an alternate funding source within the Utah Weatherization Assistance Program for households at 150-200 percent of the poverty level. The Utah Division of Housing and Community Development, which oversees Utah's weatherization program, will capitalize and administer a pilot revolving loan fund in partnership with banks and the state's housing loan fund to finance weatherization improvements for 450 qualifying households with low-interest loans.

Virginia: The City of Danville's Weatherization Pilot Program has been selected to receive more than \$1 million to partner with Vermont Energy Investment Corporation to combine public education, community outreach and mobilization with financing through a municipal loan program for rental property owners, and training for contractors. In addition, through the local municipal utility and already-deployed smart meters, the pilot project will provide recipients with energy usage feedback, monitoring, and verification systems to gauge their utility costs.

Virginia: The Local Energy Alliance Program (LEAP), based in Charlottesville, has been selected to receive nearly \$1.9 million to demonstrate energy efficiency and water conservation improvements in low-income multifamily housing, and how additional efficiency gains can be achieved through a comprehensive tenant engagement program. The project team, led by LEAP and the Green Jobs Alliance (based in Hampton Roads, VA), will work in partnership with landlords to complete an investment-grade audit and provide one-stop contracting and financing options. The retrofits will be combined with a residential education and maintenance training program, bulk purchasing, and sale of carbon offsets through the Maine State Housing Authority.

Washington: The Washington State Department of Commerce, based in Olympia, has been selected to receive \$3 million to partner with western Washington Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) and utility companies to establish the Replicable Innovative Sustainable Energy (RISE) Weatherization Pilot. This program will establish a loan fund exclusively for low-income weatherization, and create a one-stop shop offering utility rebates, below-market loans, a carbon incentive fund, and subsidies for property owners and developers of multifamily buildings for low-income residents.

Green and Healthy Homes

Connecticut: The United Illuminating Company, based in New Haven, has been selected to receive \$3 million to integrate and streamline programs that provide housing-related services to create a "one-touch" program for low-income families. Over 2,000 low-income households located in the State of Connecticut will receive comprehensive weatherization and energy efficiency upgrades and retrofits, along with education about ways to further reduce their energy costs and avoid potential health and safety hazards. The project will improve the effectiveness of low-income weatherization and partner programs by integrating activities at the individual housing unit and cutting costs where program activities overlap.

Maryland: The Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning, through its Green and Healthy Homes Initiative, Baltimore Project, has been selected to receive nearly \$1.3 million to implement a comprehensive sustainability assessment, intervention, and education program to help families save money and live more comfortably. Federal funds will weatherize housing units, and additional leveraged funds will reduce mold, stabilize lead paint, and replace windows, among other measures. All services will be provided using an integrated delivery model to provide sustainable, affordable, and safe housing for recipients.

New Technologies and Techniques

New Hampshire: The New Hampshire Community Loan Fund, based in Concord, has been selected to receive \$600,000 to initiate a partnership among six community action agencies to increase weatherization in manufactured and mobile housing. Community-based marketing approaches of local residents will be used to conduct weatherization outreach. NHCLF will pilot bulk buying of mobile home weatherization materials and will work closely with Systems Building Research Alliance to guide best practices of mobile home weatherization.

North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Charlotte has been selected to receive over \$2 million to convene a unique team from academia, traditional weatherization providers, and volunteer organizations to weatherize 800 homes throughout North Carolina's three climate zones. The project will be assisted through a utility-supported loan pool, discounts on weatherization materials, and Habitat for Humanity volunteers. Innovations in weatherization processes will be implemented through the application of best-practices and by employing a qualified instructor to train local workers. Technical innovations include the use of real-time energy monitoring equipment.

Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania Commission on Economic Opportunity, based in Wilkes-Barre, will receive more than \$2.4 million to evaluate whether additional energy savings can be achieved in weatherized homes through the use of in-home display devices that help households manage their energy use. The project will complement an existing program to weatherize 2,500 low-income homes in eastern and central Pennsylvania. The effectiveness of several models of in-home displays will be tested and evaluated. The project will also demonstrate the use of carbon credits and energy efficiency certificates as an innovative financial sustainability strategy for weatherization activities.

Vermont: Vermont Energy Investment Corporation, based in Burlington, has been selected to receive over \$700,000 to identify the extent to which in-home energy monitoring devices can benefit low-income populations. Working across 750 households, the project will install electricity and other energy use monitors and will test a range of outreach techniques to encourage their use. Using carefully designed research methods, the project will quantify the effects of the use of these in-home monitoring devices and outreach techniques on household energy savings. The project directly complements an existing smart grid technology being deployed across the state. The information and access to follow-up technical support and assistance will help recipients understand their energy use and identify savings opportunities.

Workforce Development and Volunteers

Georgia: Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI), based in Atlanta, has been selected to receive \$3 million to partner with nationally-recognized energy efficiency rating and certification organizations, as well as technical experts, to deliver weatherization services to more than 1,700 low-income homes. The project will work with eighteen HFHI chapters throughout the country to support and expand Habitat for Humanity International's weatherization efforts into a cost-effective, nationally-coordinated program that includes access to technical assistance, training materials, and funding for weatherization of existing homes throughout the HFHI network. The HFHI chapters involved include Mobile, AL; Sacramento, CA; Tulare County, CA; Marion County, FL; Waveland, FL; Des Moines, IA; Lake County, IL; Portland, ME; HFHI 7 Rivers Maine; Kent County, MI; Minneapolis - St. Paul, MN; Jackson, MS; Durham, NC; Charlotte, NC; Philadelphia, PA; Memphis, TN; Austin, TX; and Washington, DC.

Massachusetts: YouthBuild, USA, based in Somerville, has been selected to receive nearly \$1.4 million to pilot a nationally coordinated system for local YouthBuild sponsoring organizations to weatherize low-income homes in their neighborhoods. The programs will use a standardized approach to auditing, installation, and post-retrofit evaluation; create green collar careers for YouthBuild graduates; and demonstrate a model wherein YouthBuild programs can transition their weatherization services into fee-for-service divisions to employ well-trained graduates, generating revenue to be used for training additional local residents. Six urban and rural YouthBuild locations will participate in the pilot: Hartford, CT; Baltimore, MD; Red Lake Nation in MN; Long Island, NY; Petersburg, VA; and Kincaid, WV.

Ohio: People Working Cooperatively, based in Cincinnati, has been selected to receive \$1.5 million to establish a comprehensive energy conservation program that will integrate delivery of weatherization and housing rehabilitation services through utility programs and an existing network of 5,000 volunteers. The project will provide weatherization services to approximately 675 low-income households in Indiana and the Duke Energy service area in Ohio drawing on volunteer labor. Smart meters will be installed as well as a photovoltaic solar system on a multi-family building. The project will also develop a real-time evaluation system to improve the cost-effectiveness and delivery of weatherization services.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy