



At Eastern Connecticut  
State University

**Testimony of William Leahy  
Institute for Sustainable Energy at Eastern Connecticut State University  
Before the  
The Department of Social Services  
Tuesday, May %, 2009**

Good afternoon. My name is William Leahy and I am the Chief Operating Officer for the Institute for Sustainable Energy (ISE) at Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU) I am here today to speak about the proposed Weatherization assistance for Low Income Persons Program State Plan and its relationship to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the creation of sustainable Green Collar Jobs.

As stated in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act **Weatherization Assistance Program** Proposed Connecticut State Plan, this is not just about weatherization, caulk and weather-stripping program, but a **plan “...meant to stimulate the economy by creating new weatherization training programs and projects that lead to new and sustainable green technology jobs.”** In two and one-half years, when the stimulus funds have been spent, we will need to ask ourselves, “What did we accomplish?” Did our actions make permanent improvements in the triple bottom line – the economy, people’s lives and the environment? The priorities of the ARRA are clear:

- Put people to work in **family supporting, career directed, sustainable jobs** in the private sector.
- Stimulate the economy by encouraging the development of **new sustainable businesses and industries**.
- Reduce our dependence on foreign oil which strengthens our national security.
- Encourage the development, production, sale and installation of innovative sustainable technologies and renewable energy.
- Reduce the burden on home owners, renters and tax payers of heating energy inefficient buildings.
- Improve the environment by reducing pollution and green house gases.

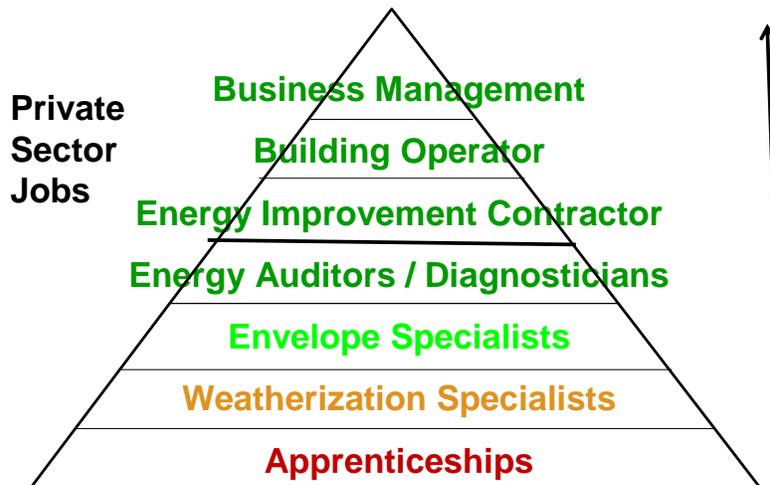
**ARRA provides a unique opportunity** to do more than provide temporary employment and job training, but instead provides skill development, as well as career, business and personal development training. The benefits should last well beyond the duration of the federal funding. The stimulus package was based on studies that encouraged job creation opportunities which would make a significant and lasting change in our economy and society. **Green Jobs offer above average wages and create opportunities to people of all ages, gender and race. The training should be open to all, targeting not only the unemployed**

**and under-employed, but also at-risk youth, welfare-to-work moms, and those recently released from incarceration.**

To bring the economy back on course, we need to create an educational and skill development progression that supports upward mobility. For example:

Training may begin with the entry level **weatherization certification** program, complete with classes on building science and material selection, supervised application experience in a lab, on-the-job apprenticeship, culminating with testing for national certification. But it shouldn't stop there. Successful candidates should be encouraged to continue training to achieve certification as **envelope specialists**, capable of window and door replacement and ceiling and wall insulation. These two programs would provide salable skills that would permit a participant to work for a building contractor specializing in energy improvements. If we offer a certification course in **energy auditing and analysis**, the candidate could go on to become a weatherization program or utility energy auditor, a project estimator or inspector, a crew supervisor, a building materials salesperson, or even a commissioning agent. If we provide opportunities to **take business development** courses, the participants could become licensed **home improvement contractors** specializing in energy efficiency. With additional training in building mechanical and electrical systems, the participant could become a **buildings operator** or **certified energy manager**, with the potential to work for school systems, housing authorities, municipal complexes, industrial settings and property management firms. The educational continuum would be similar for training individuals for other green collar jobs, such as solar assessors and installers. The goal is to provide training that leads to a family supporting, career directed, sustainable job in the private sector.

**Weatherization Training can lead to Family-Supporting, Career Tracking, Sustainable Jobs**



To support this program, the Institute for Sustainable Energy has helped facilitate a partnership between **the CT Community Colleges** and the **CT Technical High Schools**. Connecticut's community colleges are responsive to changing job requirements and providing both business and job certification training. On the other hand, the CT Technical High Schools are known for their technology laboratories and success in producing job ready technical graduates. These two educational systems must, however, coordinate their programs and activities to be responsive to these developing job markets and the needs of multiple stakeholders, including; the Department of Social Services, the Department of Labor, Department of Economic and Community Development, the Community Action Agencies, the Workforce Investment Boards, the utilities and the private sector business community.

The job training goal should be to create a continuum of practical courses making progress toward achieving long-term private sector careers and small business development. The minimal training requirements and energy audit for federal weatherization compliance should be the lowest common denominator for all trainees. Recognized **national standards and certification** are available for most Green Collar Jobs, including; weatherization specialist, envelope specialists, energy auditor, commissioning agent, health and safety inspectors, renewable site analyst, renewable equipment installer, green building certifiers, certified building operator, and certified energy manager. By preparing participants in an appropriately coordinated progression for nationally recognized certification, job skills will be easily transferable to multiple positions and geographically, not merely limited to just meeting short-term local task-oriented two and one half year program needs.

The ARRA funding limits for the low income weatherization program has a **higher funding level and a lower cost/benefit threshold** than past programs, encouraging more **comprehensive improvements** in participating households. As a result, heating system equipment replacement and building repairs will likely be offered. This will necessitate energy efficiency and green building re-training for contractors in the recognized trades, such as carpentry, electrical, HVAC and plumbing, who will be responsible for making major, more capital intensive improvements as part of the program. Both the CT Community Colleges and the CT Technical High Schools are developing programs to address these technologies and efficiency strategies.

ISE has the capabilities of assisting DSS and other state agencies in the coordination of this massive expansion of training capabilities needed to create the ARRA Green Job workforce. Such coordination is essential to maximize the potential of training available under these funds. Currently, ISE provides local school systems with energy management training for their maintenance staffs, energy code training for local building officials, Green Building training to boards of education and school building committees, as well as teacher workshops on climate change and energy efficiency. I am the chief operating officer of the ISE, I have an advanced degree in curriculum development for technical education, as well as an advanced degree in business. I am a Certified Energy Manager through the Association of Energy Engineers and a LEED Accredited Professional through the US Green Building Council. My work experience includes twelve years of teaching and supervision of technical education, twenty-one years in energy efficiency program development and implementation with national recognition for several programs, and nearly seven years in my position at ISE, which has received numerous awards at the federal and regional levels for its environmental merit and program initiatives, including national EnergyStar Partner of the Year for

Excellence in Energy Education in 2004. I am also the Green Energy/Green Building committee co-chair of the B-Green 2020 initiative in Bridgeport.

ISE could provide services, such as researching and selecting the most appropriate nationally recognized certification standards and securing the rights as an affiliate member to utilize that certification for the range of positions needed for the Weatherization Assistance Program; developing the curriculum and regionally appropriate educational materials to support training and certification of participants; providing coordination of the educational service providers, including the community colleges, technical high schools, and outside training agents; coordinating regional training resources, schedules and sessions to meet the workforce requirements and timelines and developing and submitting timely reports on training program activity and progress. In addition, ISE could support regular meetings of a stakeholder council necessary to facilitate open communication between all participating agencies and organizations. As an administrative department within the Connecticut State University System, the cost of these services to DSS would be based on the recovery of staff salaries and benefits, transportation, supplies and overhead costs for time and materials dedicated to this project.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today and to offer our services. We share the common goal to make this and all the ARRA initiatives a success for the citizens of our state and the economy of our country. I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have on this testimony or on Green collar Jobs.

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