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Clean Energy Job Creation in the Local Spotlight

National Clean Energy Tour Comes to Newark, Aims to Create Good Green Jobs

Newark, NJ – National, state and local leaders representing government, business, labor and environmental groups convened today in Newark for the “Clean Energy Roadshow.” The Roadshow was created to find ways to spur collaborative public-private investment in the clean energy economy and create quality green jobs for American workers. Newark is the Roadshow’s eighth stop in a multi-city, multi-state national tour that is expected to run through 2011.

“Clean energy jobs will be the jobs of the future, whether they are focused on improving energy efficiency of our homes or building wind turbines, solar panels, and electric vehicles,” said Gil Sperling, Senior Advisor at the Department of Energy. **“The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provided the down payment for our nation’s transition to a clean energy economy. We need to leverage the combined resources of local and state governments and the private sector through partnerships like we’re building here today to get the best return on these investments.”**

The Clean Energy Roadshow brought together a diverse mix of groups - from clean energy business leaders and innovators, to labor unions, environmental groups and community organizations - to create sustained clean energy markets by catalyzing job creation and economic development. National policymakers had the opportunity to meet with local business leaders and community organizers to share best practices, facilitate clean energy job-creation opportunities from the Recovery Act and identify ways to create a sustainable market demand for clean energy technologies.

The Roadshow is currently focused in large part on strengthening America’s energy efficiency retrofit industry. Last year, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) invested \$5 billion to expand the Department of Energy’s (DOE) Weatherization Assistance Program, which provides funding for weatherization services for low-income families in communities across the country. WAP provides significant energy savings and improves the health and well being for low-income Americans, whose energy burdens are on average more than four times greater than middle and high income Americans. ARRA was responsible for retrofitting more than 125,000 US homes in 2009, and the Administration expects to weatherize at least 250,000 homes in 2010. At the Roadshow, participants discussed ways to ramp up both public *and* private investments in America’s emerging residential retrofit industry. Some ideas discussed included “pay-as-you-save” models and PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) financing, utility partnerships, bonds and pension fund investments.

“Newark, New Jersey is continuing to become a national model of urban transformation and is leading the way for municipalities, which are putting more resources into energy conservation and creating green jobs for our residents,” said Mayor Cory Booker. **“Thanks to our community partnerships, over 1,000 households have been weatherized; hundreds of new energy star housing units are coming on-line and over 40 businesses have connected to cost saving energy efficiency programs. Everyday our progress is helping to build a cleaner and greener City.”**

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Part of the Newark Roadshow involved members of the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) Local 55 demonstrating elements of a home energy efficiency retrofit, including conducting an infrared scan for air leaks and blowing insulation into drafty walls. LIUNA has designed a breakthrough national program to train local workers to do skilled retrofits of millions of energy inefficient American homes. Quality training programs like LIUNA's are critical to building a skilled workforce that will help create a sustained market for private sector residential retrofit marketplace in cities like Newark and around the country.

"From the beginning LIUNA has reached out to public officials, community leaders, and private industry to partner in the burgeoning field of weatherization," said Raymond M. Pocino, LIUNA Vice President and Regional Manager. **"Home retrofitting is a triple-win: we can put people to work in family-supporting jobs, ease the burden of crippling energy bills on families, and reduce our carbon footprint. As New Jersey's designated training provider for weatherization, LIUNA intends to train well over 700 New Jersey residents for careers in weatherization. We have also developed the support network, through Laborers local 55, to provide a skilled and dependable workforce to employers and keep this state and this industry moving forward."**

"At a time when the construction industry is experiencing 25 percent unemployment, this new weatherization industry has the potential to get people working, grow my business, and strengthen our community. But a well-trained workforce is key to making this new industry successful and sustainable," said Steve Butler, president of GreenLight Solutions. **"Partnering with LIUNA has helped me to find and hire well-trained, credentialed workers that do quality work – and do the job right the first time."**

Retrofitting energy inefficient homes in America will not only create tens of thousands of new jobs, but it will also save families an average of \$440 to \$600 a year on their home energy bills, and in some cases much more. In addition, it will reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve quality of life for homeowners and families and reduce U.S carbon emissions equivalent to taking 615,000 cars off the road in order to help mitigate climate change.

"The Sierra Club applauds Mayor Booker, U.S. DOE, and LIUNA for their commitment to growing the economy in a way that builds healthy families, healthy homes, and healthy communities," said Grace Sica, Outreach Coordinator, New Jersey Sierra Club. **"Now is the time to build a clean energy efficient economy and it should start with our own homes. Energy efficiency is a win-win-win, it will create good paying jobs, save money and resources, and cut global warming pollution."**

The Roadshow is a collaboration between the Clean Economy Network, Change to Win, the Sierra Club, LIUNA, Blue Green Alliance, Conservation Services Group and a growing base of national partners. The Department of Energy has been an instrumental part of the Roadshow, supporting its goals of increased collaboration and providing improved understanding of the Recovery through Retrofit program.

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