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Local Energy Efficiency Upgrade Program Jumpstarted by National Retrofit Initiative

National Clean Energy Tour Comes to Cincinnati to Highlight Local Retrofit Progress

Cincinnati, OH – National, state and local leaders representing government, business, labor and environmental groups reconvened today in Cincinnati to celebrate the Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance's (GCEA) \$17 million "Retrofit Ramp-Up" award from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). The leaders first met in September during a stop on the "Clean Energy Roadshow," a multi-city, multi-state tour created to find ways to spur collaborative public-private investment in the clean energy economy and create quality green jobs for American workers.

"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."**

U.S. Representative Steve Driehaus joined GCEA volunteers at a local home to kick off the organization's first "efficiency day" outreach program. Beginning May 1, 30 GCEA volunteers will visit 1,000 homes in the Mt. Washington neighborhood to hand out energy efficient light bulbs and sign homeowners up for \$50 energy audits. A similar neighborhood-focused effort is planned in Wyoming on July 17. GCEA, a non-profit organization that provides educational, project management and financing services for energy efficiency retrofits, was the recipient of one of 25 "Retrofit Ramp-Up" grants from the Department of Energy.

"The Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance has offered a plan to retrofit thousands of homes and businesses in our community, putting people to work and helping to drive down utility costs. The Recovery Act is helping to move these projects forward," said Rep. Driehaus. **"I'm pleased to join with local leaders today whose commitment to clean energy development helped secure these critical resources and whose hard work is moving us toward tomorrow's clean energy economy."**

GCEA's energy efficiency programs are supported by a financial strategy that leverages both federal funding, such as the Ramp-up award, and private capital. This successful collaborative public-private financing approach was highlighted during September's Roadshow meetings. The Roadshow is designed to bring together a diverse mix of groups - from business leaders investing in clean technology manufacturing, to labor unions, environmental groups and community organizers - to create sustained clean energy markets by catalyzing job creation and economic development.

"The model that we have developed, supported by the Greater Cincinnati Foundation, Duke Energy, 7 local governments throughout Southwest Ohio and Northern Kentucky, and many other key partners, forms a strong base for expanding our energy efficiency programs throughout the region," said Andy Holzhauser, GCEA's Executive Director. **"We anticipate involving private capital to generate an economic impact of \$100 million or more during the period of the grant."**

“Our vision for clean energy starts with investing in the people and places that are creating and retaining jobs, saving energy, increasing renewable energy generation, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions,” said Nadeane Howard, Director of the Ohio Department of Development’s Energy Resources Division.

“Organizations like the Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance are key partners in our plans for clean energy in Ohio as they continue to educate Ohioans and give them the tools they need to be more energy efficient.”

Under the Department of Energy’s Retrofit Ramp-up initiative, communities, governments, private sector companies and non-profit organizations will work together on pioneering innovative programs for concentrated and broad-based retrofits of neighborhoods and towns – and eventually entire states. This program is expected to save households and businesses across the nation about \$100 million annually in energy bills, while leveraging an estimated \$2.8 billion in other sources over the next three years.

“This unique partnership will move our common goals of promoting energy efficiency in the region forward,” said Andrew Ritch, Director of Renewable Energy Strategy for Duke Energy. **“Working with the GCEA, we can create energy savings for customers which compliment the existing efficiency products and services within our Save-A-Watt program. We look forward to collaborative efforts across city, county and state lines that encourage home energy efficiency and create green jobs.”**

Retrofitting energy inefficient homes in America will not only save families an average of \$440 to \$600 a year on their home energy bills, but will also create tens of thousands of new jobs by scaling the American weatherization industry. 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.

"LIUNA is proud to be working with community partners like GCEA to build a more energy-efficient, greener Cincinnati," said Rob Richardson, Jr, Marketing Representative for LIUNA. **"With soaring unemployment, especially in the construction industry, we need to get people working again. LIUNA has designed a breakthrough training program that will train and employ local workers in good-paying, future-focused jobs. Our workers will make sure the job is done right the first time, so homeowners realize the full savings potential and American tax dollars are put to good use."**

The Clean Energy Roadshow is a collaboration between the Clean Economy Development Center, the Clean Economy Network, Change to Win, the Sierra Club, LIUNA (the Laborers’ International Union of North America), Blue Green Alliance, Conservation Services Group and a growing base of national partners. DOE 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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