



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

ANDREW S. LEVIN
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Monica Martinez
COMMISSIONER

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CHAIRMAN

Greg R. White
COMMISSIONER

EO Collaborative
Low-Income Meeting Minutes
9/10/10

Introductions

- Meredith Fowlie of UC Berkeley introduced Jesse Worker to the group. Jesse is her project's Michigan-based Manager who will be coordinating the study's efforts with the University of Michigan and Michigan Community Action Agency Association (MCAAA). (For those wishing to review Meredith's original presentation to the Low-Income Collaborative from 11/09: http://www.dleg.state.mi.us/mpsc/electric/workgroups/lowincome/fowlie_wolfram.pdf)
 - Meredith mentioned she is sensitive to what is being asked of implementation agencies and indicated there are resources to help deal with forms and paperwork generated by the study.
 - She is working with a firm that collects information on Michigan citizens to try to determine households eligible for this low-income weatherization study, but is open to other sources of information to help pinpoint subjects.
 - Study will focus on the impact of weatherization on households and the impact of various uptake encouragement strategies on participation levels. Meredith also indicated she is open to including questions in the survey that may be used to gather useful information for government/utility/nonprofit organizations.
 - Study timeline: pilot projects slated to begin October/November 2010 with full scale rollout depending on pilot results: small or non-existent CAA waitlists may allow a Jan/Feb/Mar program start, with larger waitlists resulting in the program extending into the next heating year.
 - This study will evaluate new weatherization projects, where current federally funded evaluations are looking at past programs.
 - The study needs household level monthly utility billing data. Currently using Minnesota data, but are looking for ways to get Michigan information. 30,000 household sample size is being considered, with the expectation of 4-5% sample size.
 - Marty Kushler requested a technical appendix from Meredith, with the agreement to share this with the workgroup members.
 - Constance Costner (MSU Extension) mentioned the State of the State Evaluation is being conducted and offered to add one or two questions to help gather baseline data. This study gathers data in real time, so questions are needed before next season.
 - Aileen Gow (LBWL) asked if Meredith was working with neighborhood associations that would provide grass root level support and contacts.

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- Marty mentioned that “Better Building for Michigan”, part of the MRRI and Michigan Saves/Public Sector Consultants would be good choices for consideration.
- Potential Study Proposal
 - *Deadline for low-income deliverables to Lori is September 21st.*
 - Rob Ozar (MPSC): Importance of this study is that it will provide data for future Energy Optimization (EO) programs and the integration of Smart Grid with Energy Efficiency (EE).
 - What about the impact of pre-paid meters on low-income customers? Look at market barriers to the update of EE measures and what is achievable. PA 295 assumes Utility Cost Tests (UCT) will not be met, that those programs will be packed with others so the portfolio as a whole will meet UCT.
 - Marty: Information on rental properties is important in the low-income area. Owned homes have data, but little is out there on rental property (both multi-family and single families). Self-reported data is not as accurate as data collected on home visits.
 - Steve Betterly (Office of Services to the Aging): what is the tipping point for payback on low-income weatherization measures?
 - Marty: Low-income weatherization is 100% paid for by other parties. Low-income individuals will not make the investment if they have to pay.
 - Aileen: ElderCare presentation she attended was very good – they take a holistic approach to senior needs and encourage them to apply for food stamps which will open the door to many other benefits.
 - Sharon: ARRA funds are being used - \$10 – 12,000 per house in some cases where roof repair is an issue. CAP agencies don’t need to do much marketing to get a waiting list – and they are getting in jobs every day that leverage funds
 - DTE: funds from DOE and the State have opened up for the next fiscal year. As of September Edison is at 40% spend of their EO funds.
 - MPSC is reserving up to 30% for roof repair
 - CAP agencies are not using enough EO dollars.
 - Marty: The weatherization network was swamped by DOE & ARRA funds, experienced logistical slowdowns. It’s not the case that there isn’t enough low-income population to serve.
 - Jamie: EO money will continue to be around, ARRA funds may not, so there’s pressure to spend ARRA funds.
 - Rob: Would it be helpful to look at redirecting low-income EO funds temporarily? Use them to keep unexpectedly popular incentive programs open (i.e. furnace rebates).
 - Sharon: Efficiency United has met their low-income goals and cautions against this strategy.
 - Marty: (Referencing upcoming Potential Study) We need a good, statistically representative picture of the state.
 - Art: need to redirect dollars to get Kwh savings.

- Jamie: Work outside CAPs to achieve goals – direct installs? CAPs can now do multi-family homes (5+ units)
- Sharon: we'll look at the barriers and have a better view of problems at the end of the year.
- Rob: has ACEEE done any benchmarking?
- Marty: That could be a good source – will check and get back to us with copies of studies, etc. The common practice is, be proportional.

The deadline of September 21st for input into Potential Study deliverables was given to the group.

Adjournment at 2:45 p.m.