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Press Release

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Gov. Schwarzenegger Announces California First State in Nation to Apply for Energy Program Recovery Act Funding



Setting the stage for one of the most ambitious initiatives to upgrade energy efficiency and create jobs, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today announced that California is the first state in the nation to submit the application for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act) State Energy Program (SEP) funding. The California Energy Commission, the agency responsible for administering the \$226 million in authorized Recovery Act funding, successfully completed the state's paperwork for the SEP to ensure that California can move forward in working with stakeholders to develop program guidelines.

"We are meeting and exceeding federal deadlines every day - and Californians can rest assured that the state is doing everything in its power to put Recovery Act funding to work to create jobs," said Governor Schwarzenegger.

California's SEP application focuses on creating and retaining jobs, achieving lasting and measurable energy benefits that follow the state's energy and environmental mandates and policy goals of increasing energy efficiency, renewable energy and bioenergy as well as reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The program itself is designed to leverage additional federal, state, local and private financing and expend money efficiently, with accountability and minimal administrative burden.

The bulk of the SEP funding (\$195.8 million) will be aimed at combining grants, contracts and loans to fund activities that concentrate on clean energy systems and energy efficiency measures and upgrades for residential and non-residential structures including improvements such as insulation, duct sealing, heating and cooling and water heating systems. The Energy Commission estimates that retrofitting California's aged and inefficient residential and non-residential structures could save the state's consumers 2.7 billion Btu annually and create over 2,100 jobs. The proposal to the Department of Energy (DOE) also included concepts that integrated efforts between low-income home energy efficiency, weatherization, utility incentives, government incentive and Recovery Act funds.

California is well positioned to develop a green workforce by collaborating with public, private and nonprofit partners such as utilities, the Employment Development Department, workforce investment boards and educational institutions. The Energy Commission is investing \$15 million to build a green workforce to meet renewable and alternative fuels and advanced vehicle technology needs. The Energy Commission will expand on this plan and leverage \$20 million in Recovery Act funds to create a more extensive green workforce on energy efficiency and clean energy sources, including wind and solar energy.

The federal DOE approval of California's SEP application is expected sometime between July and

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August. During that time, the Energy Commission will collaborate with stakeholders and the public to develop the program design and guidelines to ensure that high priority and preferences are given to projects that meet the intent and goals of the SEP. The Energy Commission anticipates the first round of SEP funding could be awarded as early as September.

To date California has been allocated over \$1 billion from the energy and climate change-related Recovery Act funding including the Block Grant funding allocation, the State Energy Program and the Weatherization Assistance Program (administered by California Department of Community Services and Development).

Governor Schwarzenegger created the California Recovery Task Force to track the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding coming into the state; work with President Barack Obama's administration; help cities, counties, non-profits, and others access the available funding; ensure that the funding funneled through the state is spent efficiently and effectively; and maintain a Web site that is frequently and thoroughly updated for Californians to be able to track the stimulus dollars.

The Task Force can be reached through its Web site, www.recovery.ca.gov, or by telephone at (916) 322-4688.

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