



March 26, 2024

Commissioner Katie S. Dykes
Department of Energy & Environmental Protection
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant, Phase II : Transportation, Built Environment & Waste Sectors

Dear Commissioner Dykes,

As President & CEO of Greater Bridgeport Community Enterprises, Inc. (GBCE), I am submitting this letter of commitment and support for the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's (CT DEEP) individual application requesting federal funding from the EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Phase II Implementation Grant (EPA-R-OAR-CPRGI-23-07). This application seeks additional funding and incentives to implement critical implementation-ready climate action measures in the transportation, buildings, and waste sectors that Connecticut identified in its Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP).

GBCE is a 501c3 community development corporation dedicated to creating "green" social impact ventures that employ disadvantaged Bridgeport residents while reducing our city's carbon footprint through recycling and energy conservation. As a result of our deep commitment to clean energy, we led the successful application to the USDOE's Local Energy Action Pilot (LEAP) program that provided Technical Assistance to organize and support the Bridgeport Regional Energy Partnership (BREP), with over 75 members / organizations, to work on a comprehensive 'Clean Energy Strategy and Implementation Plan' for our community. The mission of BREP is to reduce the energy burden for residents and small businesses, improve the quality of life, promote sustainable economic growth, and make our community more livable for residents and those who work in them by transitioning to a low-carbon, clean energy future. We are one of only 24 communities in the U.S. that were selected in 2022 to receive this technical assistance from the USDOE and NREL for our planning work. Given GBCE's and BREP's work and interests, we are intent on supporting and working for the success of DEEP's funding application and the ensuing programs that will be implemented.

The PCAP measures included in the implementation grant application are: (1) funding a medium- and heavy-duty zero emission electric vehicles incentive program; (2) replacing diesel-powered idling truck mounted attenuators used in state transportation construction work with solar and battery-powered ZeroRPM® systems; (3) expanding the state's program to remove health and safety barriers for energy efficiency improvements in residential homes and the energy efficiency program; and (4) enforcing

A Community Development Corporation

compliance with Connecticut's Commercial Organics Recycling Law and funding food waste diversion programs and composting infrastructure for municipalities in the state.

As a long-time, generational resident of Bridgeport, an Environmental Justice and Disadvantaged community, in addition to my professional duties in developing and administering programs that address our community's environmental and economic challenges, I joined the Low-Income and Disadvantaged Communities (LIDACs) Advisory Group formed by CT DEEP to advise the agency on the development of the PCAP and the implementation grant application. I am also a member of the Connecticut Equity and Environmental Justice Advisory Council. Our LIDAC group has been following the directives provided in EPA's relevant guidance, including:

- Ensuring the proposed measures were equitable, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of LIDACs.
- Providing evaluation and feedback of the potential direct and indirect benefits to LIDACs and the effectiveness, feasibility, and relevance for LIDACs.
- Providing expert knowledge and/or lived experience insights related to the unique challenges faced by LIDACs.
- Providing review and feedback on the expected outcomes for LIDACs of implementation.
- Providing feedback on the strategy for meaningful engagement with LIDACs on the development and implementation of the climate action measures throughout the life of the implementation grant.

Commitment to participate in community engagement. In my capacity in the LIDAC Advisory Group, I advised DEEP on their participant support cost strategy to ensure meaningful engagement following EPA's guidance with LIDACs on the development and implementation of the climate action measures throughout the life of the implementation grant. I understand DEEP intends to make funding available to support the cost of participation of individuals in community engagement activities for the tasks enumerated in this grant application, should funding be awarded, including for low income and disadvantaged and environmental justice communities. However, due to the state of Connecticut's procurement rules, I understand that CT DEEP is required to adhere to Connecticut's procurement standards and, in many cases, conduct a competitive Request for Proposals to select an implementer for that participant support costs program and cannot include non-governmental subrecipient partners in this application. Regardless of whether or not my organization receives funding under the competitive participant support costs program, I and my organization commit assisting CT DEEP with program implementation as follows:

- Respond to a CT DEEP Request for Information to inform the community engagement strategy and Request for Proposals for the CPRG participant support costs program for community engagement.
- Attend one or more CT DEEP-led public meetings per year, which may include meetings of the Connecticut Equity and Environmental Justice Advisory Council (CEEJAC) and its sector-specific working groups and/or the Governor's Council on Climate Change Equity and Environmental Justice Working Group as related to the implementation-ready climate action measures in the application. This participation may include:

- providing input on the design, performance measures, and resources required for CT DEEP and partners to implement the measures; and
- providing feedback to CT DEEP with ideas, contacts, and engagement to help meet Justice 40 and other environmental justice goals for measure implementation.

GBCE's support for this project will allow CT DEEP to more effectively implement these greenhouse gas reduction measures given our collective skills, knowledge, and experience in working with the Bridgeport community on impactful community development projects related to climate change and environmental justice. We strongly support CT DEEP's application for additional funding and incentives. I am confident that DEEP's plan and implementation strategy will achieve the goals of this grant that relate to LIDAC's goals:

- achieving substantial community benefits, including the reduction of criteria air pollutants and hazardous air pollutants;
- complementing other funding sources to maximize these community benefits;
- achieving significant cumulative greenhouse gas reductions by 2030 and beyond;
- and pursuing innovative policies and programs that are replicable and can be "scaled up" across multiple jurisdictions.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any additional questions. My contact information: houel@greenteambpt.com, (203) 209-6915.

Sincerely,



Adrienne Farrar Houël, President & CEO