



Climate Jobs Rhode Island
194 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02908

March 26, 2024

U.S Environmental Protection Agency Office
of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund 1200
Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Washington, DC
20460

Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
79 Elm Street
Hartford CT 06106-5127

RE: Letter of Commitment for the EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant

To Whom It May Concern,

Climate Jobs Rhode Island is committed to partnering with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) and other partner organizations for the proposed five-year *New England Heat Pump Accelerator*. The Accelerator will achieve these goals through a three-pronged strategy designed to activate the supply chain, scale solutions to the specific barriers that low- and moderate-income (LMI) households and disadvantaged communities face in adopting heat pumps and share data and educational resources across the region.

Climate Jobs Rhode Island (CJRI) is a coalition of more than thirty (30) environmental, labor and community organizations committed to working together to make Rhode Island a national leader in the development of a resilient 21st century economy through a Just Transition, one that centers our frontline communities and frontline workers.

Our members range from those who represent the frontline workers who build, repair, and maintain Rhode Island's critical infrastructure and energy systems like the RI Building and Construction Trades Council and the Rhode Island AFL-CIO, to environmental and community organizations like The Nature Conservancy, United Way of RI, Fuerza Laboral, and the Childhood Lead Action Project.

Our partnership with frontline workers and labor organizations provides us with the necessary insights and expertise to address workforce training needs and support quality job creation in the clean energy sector. Through collaborative efforts with decision-makers, industry stakeholders, workers, policy makers, and community organizations, Climate Jobs Rhode Island has demonstrated our capacity to support and drive meaningful change in the changing energy landscape.

Rhode Island and the New England region are at a critical crossroads. In Rhode Island, government, advocates, labor, industry, and community have come together around making a just transition away from a fossil fuel-driven economy and toward a sustainable, net-zero emissions economy, to ensure that our state is a leader in the transition to a net zero emissions economy. This requires not only a commitment to ensuring that we have a workforce equipped with the skills needed to build, maintain, and improve the infrastructure required for this transition, but also a commitment to driving the family-sustaining opportunities created by this transition to those most affected: those living in climate justice communities, those whose current jobs are most impacted, and those who have historically been left behind in receiving the career and skills support needed to secure and advance through family-sustaining careers.

Efficient cold-climate heat pumps can reduce energy costs and offer substantial emissions and health benefits for New England residents. We especially support this proposal for the Innovation Hub, which will dedicate significant funding to overcome barriers for LMI households and disadvantaged communities in all five states in the coalition. The projects funded under the Innovation Hub will tackle electrification challenges for unique buildings, such as mobile homes and multifamily buildings, develop community-based solutions to improve access and affordability, and provide resources to cover gaps in current programs, enabling them to offer heat pump upgrades as part of their package of services. In turn, this will position the state to meet its 2021 Act on Climate goals and reduce emissions.

As an organization centered around worker and community issues, we will support ways to engage with the Accelerator to achieve the goals of the program and help to identify pathways for Innovation Hub projects. We will support the program to secure quality community engagement, consumer protection, and worker protection from design to execution. We will also utilize our unique expertise within the program design process to ensure equitable pathways to quality jobs, while working to integrate frameworks that ensure strong labor standards and worker protections. This can include participating in program meetings, working group meetings, assisting in outreach, providing input or feedback, and/or other forms of engagement that may come about as the project is designed and implemented.

Should this funding request be successful, we look forward to working with you on this valuable project beginning in mid-2024. Please let us know how we may be of additional assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Roles", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael Roles

Executive Director, Climate Jobs RI mike@climatejobsri.org