



March 26, 2024

Department of Energy & Environmental Protection
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant, Phase II Implementation

To Whom It May Concern,

Greater Bridgeport Community Enterprises, Inc. (GBCE) is submitting this letter of commitment for the coalition application to the EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Phase II Implementation Grant (EPA-ROAR-CPRGI-23-07) for the proposed five-year New England Heat Pump Accelerator. We understand that the Accelerator will create mid-stream incentives at the distributor level to encourage the full replacement of HVAC and water heating systems across Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island. The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) is the lead applicant for the coalition.

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.

Further, as President of GBCE, I served as a member of the Low-Income and Disadvantaged Communities (LIDACs) Advisory Group formed by CT DEEP to advise the agency on the development of the State of Connecticut Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP), which included the priority measure of expanding the deployment of heat pumps statewide. Additionally, GBCE has contracted with Energize CT, the marketing and outreach partnership of our two utilities (Avangrid and Eversource), to reach out to our Bridgeport residents with information and encouragement to install heat pumps as a viable alternative to fossil fuel systems for heating and cooling. This program, "Heat Pumps 101", has welcomed and instructed more than 90 Bridgeport residents in the last 4 months. We are committed and uniquely prepared to partner with CT DEEP and other organizations to implement the New England Heat Pump Accelerator.

A Community Development Corporation

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Efficient cold-climate heat pumps can reduce energy costs and offer substantial emissions and health improvements for New England residents. Because of this fact, many states have prioritized the installation

of heat pumps through state policy and energy efficiency rebates. At the same time, there is a gap between current overall workforce capabilities and the prospective need for additional installers to meet anticipated heat pump market growth. Leveraging the distributor network to engage in training contractors on new technological capabilities and proper system design will increase contractor adoption of technology and flow these benefits to customers.

We are aware that strong community partnerships and networks are needed to design and manage the proposed heat pump accelerator program to advance environmental and public health issues in the region, We are also committed to supporting the prioritization of all disadvantaged and underserved communities within urban, rural, and tribal communities in this program.

As a member of the LIDAC Advisory Group to CT DEEP on the PCAP and implementation grant, I agree to work in our regions to support heat pump deployment and community engagement through GBCE and the following actions:

Representing GBCE, I commit to attend one or more public meetings per year, which may include regular meetings of the Connecticut Equity and Environmental Justice Advisory Council (CEEJAC), of which I am a charter member, 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 of the New England Heat Pump Accelerator. This participation may include:

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

Our support for this project will allow CT DEEP to more effectively implement the New England Heat Pump Accelerator because of our commitment, skills, knowledge, and lived experience. For example, on a personal level, about 8 years ago I installed heat pumps in my home and can personally attest to their efficiency in heating and cooling as well as to the reduction in related utility costs. Moreover, as a key organizer of Weatherization and Healthy Homes training programs for unemployed Bridgeport residents, GBCE recognizes the advantages of installing heat pumps in commercial and residential settings once the residence or building has had weatherization and healthy homes measures installed.

Should this funding request be successful, I look forward to working with you on this valuable project beginning in mid-2024. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at houel.reenteambt.com or on my direct line at (203) 209-6915.

Sincerely,



Adrienne Farrar Houël, President & CEO