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U.S Environmental Protection Agency

Rhode Island Works Best When we say UNION  
YES.

March 26, 2024

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,

The Rhode Island AFL-CIO 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.

The Rhode Island AFL-CIO represents over 80,000 union workers and their families, advocating for worker's rights and interests. We support unions to collectively negotiate with employers for improved working conditions, fair wages, and benefits. We strive for equitable treatment, safety, respect, and equal opportunities for all workers. Additionally, we operate a significant training network to equip workers with skills relevant to contemporary employment. The RI AFL-CIO also serves as an influential voice in politics and legislation, representing the concerns of working individuals and ensuring their perspectives are considered in corporate settings.

Through unionization, workers gain collective strength to address workplace issues and secure favorable agreements with employers, including provisions for safety, compensation, retirement benefits, and familyfriendly policies. Unions adapt to the changing landscape of employment, advocating for workers across industries to promote fairness and contribute to the establishment of robust standards and a thriving middle class nationwide. We dedicate ourselves to improving the lives of working families, bringing fairness and dignity to the workplace and securing social equity.

The Rhode Island AFL-CIO supports this application as our state and region are at a critical crossroads, as government, advocates, labor, industry, and community have come together around making a just transition away from a fossil-fuel fed economy and toward a sustainable, net-zero emissions economy, ensuring that New England is a leader in the transition to a net zero emissions economy. This requires 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. This application will help ensure that jobs in the clean energy

George H. Nee President • Patrick M. Crowley Secretary-Treasurer

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Erica Hammond Lead Organizer, Climate Jobs RI • Michael Roles Policy Director, Climate Jobs RI

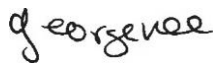
sector will be accessible for those whose current jobs are most likely to be impacted, and those who have historically been underserved in receiving the career and skill support needed to secure and advance through jobs of quality.

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 communitybased 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.

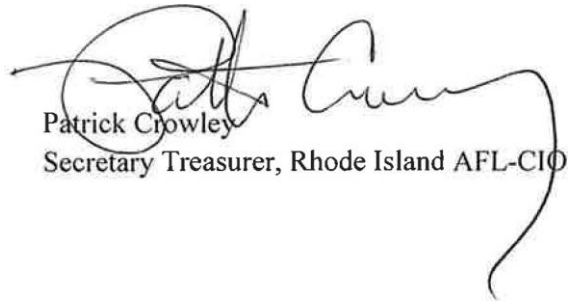
As a labor organization, we will look for ways to engage with the Accelerator to achieve the goals of the program and help to identify pathways for Innovation Hub projects. We will provide input regarding labor standards and worker protections during the program design process to ensure this program leads to family-sustaining careers in the clean energy sector for those who need them most. This can include participating in working group meetings, 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,



George Nee  
President, Rhode Island AFL-CIO



Patrick Crowley  
Secretary Treasurer, Rhode Island AFL-CIO