



Monroe County Board of Commissioners

Monroe County Courthouse

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Mark Brant, Chairman – Randy Richardville, Vice-Chairman

Lisa Sanders, Deputy Clerk/Administrative Assistant

March 20, 2024

Ms. Amy O'Leary
Executive Director
Southeast Michigan Council of Governments
1001 Woodward Ave., #1400
Detroit, MI 48226

Re: Support for SEMCOG Building Decarbonization Program Climate Pollution Reduction Grant – Implementation Grant

Ms. O'Leary:

The County of Monroe is pleased to support the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments' (SEMCOG's) application to the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Program Implementation Grant. Funding under this grant will support creation of a Building Decarbonization program in Southeast Michigan.

While there are a number of building improvement programs and incentives available in Southeast Michigan, there are considerable gaps and funding shortfalls. SEMCOG's Building Decarbonization initiative will leverage all of these programs bringing them to more residential and municipal buildings. The program will integrate these efforts into a comprehensive plan. This approach will accelerate the success of ongoing initiatives, and ensure existing funding sources are well used. Most importantly, it will result in greater reductions in energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, and energy cost burdens for residents than could otherwise be achieved by smaller programs on their own. The program will be unique in the following ways:

- **Reduce energy cost burdens through comprehensive retrofits.** The program will develop a unique and comprehensive plan for residents across the region. This includes coordinating multiple contractors through multiple stages of work rather than providing only piecemeal improvements. Ensuring the work is comprehensive, accessible, and well-funded will ensure participating building owners realize long-term utilities savings, reducing energy cost burdens in our region.
- **Add capacity to local governments and make it easier for building owners.** The program will provide energy advisers who will evaluate each building's initial condition and energy efficiency, create a unique pathway to carbon neutrality, and then work with the owner to schedule and fund as much of the work as possible. This will reduce the effort and expertise required from municipal agencies and building owners, while still ensuring the work is done correctly. Much needed funding and support will be allocated for municipal buildings.
- **Leverage existing funding.** Energy advisers will identify and draw upon existing incentives and rebates to cover the work. The CPRG funds will be used to fill gaps in these programs to ensure that all existing funding sources are optimized. This further aids local government agencies and builds upon the workforce development efforts already in place.

SEMCOG, as the regional planning organization and designated lead local air-quality planning agency under the federal Clean Air Act, is positioned to lead this work in our region. Its established relationships in the region and throughout Michigan will allow it to coordinate planning and reporting, and leverage its existing organizational structure.

Monroe County recognizes that this work will directly benefit our own residents, and ensure that SEMCOG's Building Decarbonization Program Climate Pollution Reduction Grant – Implementation Grant will compliment existing local programs available to Monroe County residents. These local programs include emergency building repairs, weatherization improvements, energy efficiency measures, furnace replacements, air conditioners, hot water heaters and appliances. We are confident SEMCOG's program will enhance the work Monroe County is already doing, and help it go further.

The County of Monroe is committed to working with SEMCOG and providing support to implement the program. We understand that SEMCOG is structuring the program to ensure Monroe County and the entire region will benefit from the program outcomes. It is our expectation this work will reduce energy cost burdens and improve the health, resilience, and quality of life for residents in our community and across the region.

Monroe County is looking forward to collaborating with SEMCOG and other regional partners through this grant.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Brant".

Mark Brant, Chairman
Monroe County Board of Commissioners