



Wider Opportunities for Women

## Fact Sheet on Green Jobs in House Climate Change Bill

[The American Clean Energy and Security Act \(H.R. 2454\)](#) that narrowly passed the House on June 26 holds the potential of opening thousands of employment and skill development opportunities to women and minorities who traditionally have been underrepresented in construction and technical areas. Action now moves to the Senate where the Energy and Natural Resources Committee has reported a bill that does not include a provision for inclusive hiring.

### Green Construction Careers Demonstration Project

The House bill establishes a demonstration project whose purpose is “to promote middle class careers and quality employment practices in the green construction sector among targeted workers and to advance efficiency and performance on construction projects.” Within 180 days of enactment, the Secretary of Labor, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy, will identify projects, including residential retrofitting projects, funded or assisted under the Act which will be required to have a minimum proportion of hours worked by members of targeted groups. The bill leaves to the discretion of the Secretary the number of projects and the percentage of work hours.

**Targeted worker** is defined as an individual who resides in the same labor market area as the project and who is—

- Eligible under the Work Opportunities Tax Credit except ex-offenders;
- Resides in a census tract where over 20% of households are beneath the Federal poverty guidelines, or is a member of a family whose earnings did not exceed 200% of poverty in the previous two years; or
- A displaced homemaker, i.e. an individual who has been providing unpaid services to family members in the home and who has been dependent on the income of another family member but is no longer supported by that income and is unemployed or underemployed and experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.
- Target groups under the Work Opportunities Tax Credit include recipients of TANF, food stamps, SSI and long-term disability assistance; veterans; high-risk youth; vocational rehabilitation referrals; summer youth employees; as well as ex-offenders.

**Apprenticeship and other training** -- Each contractor and subcontractor on construction projects identified for the demonstration must submit assurances with their bids that they participate in a qualified labor-management apprenticeship program, with a qualified pre-apprenticeship program,

for each craft and trade that will be employed. The Secretary may approve other types of DOL-registered apprenticeship and training programs if no programs exist in the locality that qualify as employee welfare benefit programs under ERISA.

**Project Labor Agreements** The Secretary may require contracting agencies and recipients of federal assistance to enter into labor-management agreements for projects over \$25 million, as encouraged in Executive Order 13502 signed by President Obama on Feb. 6. Such agreements are pre-hire collective bargaining agreements between employers and one or more labor organization. The Executive Order explains PLAs promote efficiency in Federal procurement, produce labor-management stability, and ensure compliance with laws and regulations governing safety, health, equal employment opportunity, labor and employment standards.

**Evaluation** After three years, the Secretary is to evaluate the success and may accordingly identify additional projects. The Comptroller General, five years after enactment, is to advise Congressional committees of the results of the demonstration and make appropriate recommendations.

### **Community Colleges and Career and Technical Education**

ACES authorizes the Secretary of Education to award competitive grants to community partnerships to develop programs of study under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006. The programs are to focus on emerging careers and jobs in renewable energy, energy efficiency, and climate change mitigation. Priority is given to on-line and innovative learning strategies and target low-performing and special populations as defined in Perkins. Applicants must describe how the program will address the placement of students in nontraditional occupations. "Nontraditional" is defined by law as fields in which less than 25% of the workforce is one gender.

### **Energy Worker Training Program**

The bill raises the authorization level for the 2007 Green Jobs Act from \$125 million to \$150 million. It also establishes an Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Worker Training Fund with 0.75% of the proceeds from auctioning off carbon emission allowances to businesses. The training fund will contain an estimated \$860 million by 2012-13.

### **Climate Change Worker Adjustment Assistance**

Workers displaced as a result of the shift to clean energy sources are entitled to 156 weeks of income supplements, 80 percent of their monthly health care premium, up to \$1,500 for job search assistance, up to \$1,500 for moving assistance, and additional employment services for skills assessment, job counseling, training, and other support services.