

To: Massachusetts Energy Efficiency Advisory Council Members
From: Workforce Development Stakeholders and Representatives
Re: EEAC Three-Year Plan 2022-2024

Date: December 15, 2020

Dear Energy Efficiency Advisory Council, Investor-Owned Utilities, and Department of Public Utilities,

We encourage the Energy Efficiency Advisory Council to allocate resources in the 2022-2024 budget for workforce development associated with Green Jobs.

At a time when our country is facing a crisis on multiple fronts – economic, environmental and equity – generating clean energy offers a pathway to addressing all of these issues in a comprehensive manner. However, without an equal commitment to workforce development investment, any efforts to expand clean energy options in the Commonwealth instead represents a missed opportunity to expand career pathways for communities of color.

The home repair and remodel field is a 350 billion dollar a year industry – with more than 13 million individual projects (costing over \$1000) occurring in 2018. The effort to “green” the region’s housing stock by both retrofitting older homes, building new homes to passive house standards, and continuing to deploy current and new technologies will play a major role in addressing the climate crisis. Equally important, it will create a need for a new type of skilled labor.

The expansion of a largely static industry offers new opportunities for thousands of long-term, sustainable, good paying (earning \$20 or more per hour) jobs installing new technologies. In addition, operating, maintaining and repairing these technologies (particularly home-based solar) creates an ongoing need for trained technicians to support homeowners in their efforts to transition to green energy.

Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology currently offers students who are primarily graduates of public schools in Boston, Cambridge, Somerville and the surrounding communities with access to certificate and associate degree programs that offer a direct pathway to stable, well-paying jobs, many with career growth opportunities. BFIT students are 86 percent male and 73 percent people of color, demographic groups that are often underrepresented in the typical higher education landscape. These students reflect the potential workforce to support an expanded green housing workforce.

We represent institutions and organizations that are advocating for the Commonwealth to invest in the training of this new workforce – paying at least 50% of the cost of training – to ensure these job opportunities reach the residents who need them most. Financial investment by the Commonwealth in this area will address both pressing climate and economic opportunity needs facing communities who have long been burdened by underinvestment in their futures.

We support BFIT, Roxbury Community College, and other educational institutions partnering with the Commonwealth to start green technology certificate programs. BFIT and RCC have track records of creating certificate programs to train Massachusetts residents to take

advantage of technology driven career opportunities and can be nimble in adapting and adding programs as this field continues to evolve.

We look forward to following this policy conversation. Investing in the training of low-income residents to be part of the climate solutions and help the Commonwealth meet its carbon emissions reductions goals is a win-win outcome.

Sincerely,

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