



## Roadmap: One Million Green Homes & 30,000 Green Jobs in Five Years

**NEW YORK'S ENERGY/ECONOMY PROBLEM:** As fuel costs soar and the economy contracts, New Yorkers face increasing high energy-affordability burdens and cold winters. The problem isn't just economic – it's that our homes waste far more energy than they should.

Buildings are big energy-guzzlers in New York State, consuming 16% of our entire supply. It doesn't come cheap: this year, the average New Yorker's household energy bill will top \$3,700. That's 8% of median household income – or, for households at poverty level, a full 17% of income. Fuel prices are likely to remain high, so short-term fixes (like emergency home heating grants) are not sustainable solutions.

But deeper solutions are within reach. Our bills aren't high just because of soaring fuel prices, or because we don't turn off lights – they're high because our homes are not energy-efficient. *That's* a problem we can solve, even in tough times, for everyone.

**ONE SOLUTION FOR MANY PROBLEMS:** The Center for Working Families is leading a partnership to develop a state program that will make our homes energy-efficient, pay for itself, save consumers money, create tens of thousands of green jobs and fight global warming.

We already know that energy-efficiency retrofits (like air-sealing, installing boiler controls, replacing oversized water heaters, etc.) can save more than 30% a year – over \$1100 – on a household's energy costs. Small-scale state programs, through the NYS Energy Research & Development Authority (NYSERDA), achieve these levels of success. Private companies increasingly finance retrofits, too, since energy savings provide reliable returns. Although it makes good financial sense – and global warming poses clear dangers – we have not invested in green retrofits on a mass scale.

Residential units and larger facilities must be upgraded to reduce heating and cooling needs, electric consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, “heat island effect” and stormwater run-off. A large scale retrofit program would provide home energy audits to everyone who wanted them. Then it would provide, at no upfront cost, a range of site-appropriate upgrades: insulating walls, switching energy-guzzling appliances and light bulbs to Energy Star models, incorporating green building materials, installing a live green roof, or looking at alternative power sources where feasible. Costs would be recaptured over time, as consumers saved on energy bills.

**We can do it.** The state can leverage private investors' interest in the reliable returns generated by residential energy efficiency, to set up an investment pool that will fund the program without exacerbating budget woes. We can create a state program to perform a million residential retrofits in five years, and prime the green economy to provide vast public benefits.

## GREENING OUR HOMES BRINGS PUBLIC BENEFITS:

- **SAVE** families and local governments billions of dollars on energy bills.
- **REDUCE** greenhouse gases and avoid the need for new power plants and imported fuels.
- **CREATE GOOD JOBS** as we invest in retrofitting New York, rather than power generation. We can establish standards so that retrofit funds create quality jobs and job-linked training, grow opportunities for union workers, and provide access to jobs in the most distressed parts of New York State.
- **IMPROVE HOUSING & INCREASE AFFORDABILITY** by upgrading housing units to lower the overall cost of owning or renting a home.
- **SPUR DEMAND FOR GREEN MATERIALS** to support New York State manufacturers, as they retool and expand to capture this growing market.
- **LEVERAGE MORE DOLLARS** as costs are recaptured through energy savings, and state incentives draw private funds. These funds can drive long-term growth, well beyond the first million retrofits.



## **GREEN JOBS/GREEN HOMES NY: What the program is, and how it will work.**

Green Jobs/Green Homes NY – a program to perform energy-efficiency retrofits on a million housing units in five years – will jumpstart mass retrofits, remove barriers like lack of capital and green labor shortages, and ensure that greening is an engine for equitable economic growth in New York State.

Green Jobs/Green Homes NY will provide retrofits at no up-front cost to homeowners and landlords, and meet requirements for energy savings, public benefit and benefit to renters, and quality job standards. Retrofits will be targeted to areas heavily affected by economic and environmental issues including “energy poverty,” high emissions and unemployment. NYSERDA, which has already been organizing retrofit work, should lead the program.

Under the program, owners will be able to request home energy audits to learn which retrofits will lower bills and provide environmental benefits. Owners can then have retrofits performed through the state program, using funds from a private investment pool. Afterward, as owners save on energy, they pay a charge on their utility bill – less than the expected savings – until costs are recovered (i.e. “on-bill recovery.”)

Green Jobs/Green Homes NY will include industry-driven workforce policy to develop job-linked training, grow opportunities for union workers, create access to jobs in distressed parts of the state, and establish career paths with certifications and family-sustaining wage standards. The first million retrofits are currently estimated to amount to more than 30,000 construction jobs – and still more jobs in marketing and other program work.