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October 6, 2009

Department of Energy Resources
c/o Energy Efficiency Advisory Council
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 1020
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Energy Efficiency Advisory Council:

My name is Kenny Mak, and I am a member of the Chinese Progressive Association. I want to testify in support of community-driven pilot programs in neighborhoods that need it the most. A pilot program will be an important testing ground for innovative ideas that can impact how we do energy efficiency work across the country. In the first year of these plans we need funding for these pilots so that we can create a model for best practices. Chinatown is a perfect example of a neighborhood that can benefit from a pilot program and help create some of these best practices. With a low rate of home ownership and a number of large housing complexes, this program can help find solutions to some of the most daunting issues in bringing energy efficiency services to low-income tenants and multi-family housing residents.

Many of our communities are suffering from economic hardship, because of irresponsibility by America's financial sector. We need good jobs, multilingual trainings, and a way to reduce housing costs for residents. The only way that these programs can work is through utilizing the strength of our community organizations that already have relationships with residents and workers to coordinate and encourage people in the community to weatherize their homes. A neighborhood-based pilot program, anchored by our most trusted community groups, can make Massachusetts more energy efficient, more just, and a better place for all to live. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kenny Mak