

## **Testimony to Mass EEAC April 5, 2018, Springfield Listening Session**

Thank you for allowing us to speak to you about this very important issue, a key pursuit to combating climate change and cleaning the polluted air in cities like Springfield. Energy efficiency and conservation in the heating and cooling of buildings are high on the list of measures that will decrease the burning of fossil fuels and accompanying emission of greenhouse gases. And though Massachusetts is a leader in energy efficiency nationwide, there is still much, much to be done and limited time in which to do it.

We of Climate Action NOW are requesting that the EEAC, through its influence on the DOER, improve Mass Save's breadth of reach, its depth of action and its transparency. We ask energy efficiency programs to go Broader, Deeper and be More Transparent.

Specifically, we request that households making up to 120% of median be eligible for full Mass Save subsidies, and that there be more vigorous and aggressive outreach to Low- and Moderate-Income families, families of color and non-English-speaking families, the disabled, and elderly. For low-income families, Pioneer Valley Community Action has found that signing people up for energy audits through an "opt-out" question on the LIHEAP application is far more effective than requesting "opt-in". Therefore, the Mass Save program should consider the same 'opt-out' approach.

Getting energy efficiency services to renters is problematic, and this should be analyzed and addressed. It has been suggested for non-low-income households that the utilities could prepay for work done and then be repaid interest-free through monthly bills.

For deepening energy efficiency work, we are pleased to have discovered that Mass Save has lifted the "cap" on services covered by subsidy. Thank you, thank you. However, "cost-effective" work needs to be redefined to include the health benefits of insulation, weatherization and replacement of dirty furnaces. As we learn more about the social and health impacts of indoor air pollution caused by the burning of fossil fuels, these externalized costs to householders should be factored into the cost-benefit analysis of Mass Save's work. Also, the long-term energy saving benefits should be factored in- not just those that can be estimated over a 7-year time span. After all, green house gas emissions are a long-term problem.

Third, transparency is critical to the success of the program. Overall energy efficiency goals for the program must increase annually and be aggressive and science-based, the energy saved should be measured, and performance incentives based on measured and verified fulfillment of the goals.

Communities should have access to data about the total number of households served including what services were provided, as well as regarding the number served of low and moderate-income households, non-English-speaking households and those with inhabitants of

color, the elderly and the disabled. We need to know that we are serving those in need, not just those who can pay for services.

These are our dollars and we want to know that they are being spent well, and are addressing our highest priorities.

Finally, gas is not a bridge fuel nor is it clean. There must be an option to replace inefficient gas furnaces with high efficiency air source heat pumps that may be sourced with renewables and provide households with improved indoor air quality.

Thank you for your work and for listening to us today.

Respectfully submitted,

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