

**DRAFT**

September 22, 2010

District of Columbia*Bladensburg***Bowie**College Park**Frederick**Frederick County**Gaithersburg**Greenbelt**Montgomery County**Prince George's County**Rockville**Takoma Park**Alexandria**Arlington County**Fairfax**Fairfax County**Falls Church**Loudoun County**Manassas**Manassas Park**Prince William County***Adjunct member*

The Honorable Barack Obama
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

RE: EECBG Funding At Work in the Metropolitan Washington Region

Dear President Obama:

I write on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) to thank you for including \$3.2 billion for the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and to urge you to provide full funding for this vital program in your FY 2012 budget. At a time when local budgets are severely strained, this funding has enabled our community to invest in energy security, save local taxpayer energy costs and create desperately needed local jobs.

This action is grounded in the COG Board adoption of the *National Capital Region Climate Change Report* in November 2008. The EECBG program is consistent with recommendations included in the Climate Report which establish targets for increased energy efficiency in government operations and improved building performance through retrofits and other investments in efficiency and conservation.

The Metropolitan Washington region is implementing almost ninety projects which are creating local jobs and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by saving energy in the residential, commercial, and government sectors throughout the region. Over 3,500 buildings will receive energy audits to identify the most cost-effective measures for improving energy efficiency. Over 3,000 outdoor lights will be upgraded to more efficient technologies, including LEDs. Several projects will push the savings further. One project will install solar-powered LED lights in a parking lot; officials expect to generate enough electricity to sell energy back to the grid. The EECBG funding is allowing local progress and encouraging further innovation in energy efficiency and renewable energy applications in communities' everyday operations.

While we are extremely grateful that you made this initial investment in communities like ours nationwide, funding for the EECBG program must be included in next year's federal budget if we are to maintain the momentum and continue the progress that has begun. The transformations that are taking place at the local level throughout the

country are helping to enhance American energy independence, create local jobs, and climate change. These changes must be encouraged to continue and expand, not allowed to expire when ARRA funding is no longer available. That is why COG's Climate, Energy and Environment Policy Committee has joined the Energy Block Grants Work! campaign and is working with hundreds of communities nationwide to share with you the impressive results and importance of this vital program.

Thank you for your consideration of this important program priority funding request. By continuing to invest federal EECBG funding in thousands of local clean energy projects at the grassroots level, we can continue to put people back to work, revitalize our economy, and reduce our nation's dependence on foreign sources of energy. Thank you again for working to provide this invaluable funding for local energy efficiency and renewable energy initiatives. I look forward to working with your Administration to secure funding for the EECBG program in FY 2012, so that the Metropolitan Washington region can build upon our many energy successes.

Sincerely,

Kwame Brown, Chair
COG Board of Directors

cc: Jay Fissette, Chair, Climate Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC)
Secretary Steven Chu, U.S. Department of Energy
National Capital Region Congressional Delegation:
Sen. Benjamin L. Cardin
Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski
Sen. Mark R. Warner
Sen. Jim Webb
Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton
Rep. Roscoe Bartlett
Rep. Steny H. Hoyer
Rep. Chris Van Hollen
Rep. Donna F. Edwards
Rep. Gerard E. Connolly
Rep. Jim Moran
Rep. Robert J. Wittman
Rep. Frank R. Wolf