

January 12, 2012

President Barack Obama
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Qualified Energy Conservation Bonds (QECCBs) have enormous potential to create jobs. They can be used to finance clean energy projects that save energy and put Americans back to work.

So far, however, only a handful of states and municipalities have deployed QECCBs, even though qualifying projects can be financed at very low interest rates. Of the \$3.2 billion allocated to states and municipalities by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, we believe that approximately 83% of these allocations remain unused.

Across the country, QECCBs have been vastly underutilized in part because the authorizing federal legislation is vague and clarifying guidance has not been issued. In particular, the law includes special provisions for “green community programs” but offers no guidance on what constitutes a “green community program.” The law further requires a 20% reduction in energy consumption but provides no guidance on how issuers must calculate the required reduction in energy use. The attached addendum outlines these and other challenges more completely; it also includes proposed remedies, based on existing industry and legislative standards.

Mr. President, we respectfully request that you eliminate the challenges listed in the attached addendum by directing the IRS to issue Temporary Regulations or a Revenue Procedure on QECCBs by March 30, 2012. In the meantime, we propose to meet with members of your leadership team, copied below, to coordinate our efforts so that once we have guidance from the IRS, we can move quickly to help states and municipalities use their QECCB allocations to create more jobs.

Thank you so much for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Bellis
Energy Programs Consortium

Denise Fairchild
Emerald Cities

Colin Bishopp
Clean Economy Development Center

Natalie Foster
Rebuild the Dream

Amy Bolten
Sonoma County Water Agency

Matt Golden
Efficiency First

Christina Cernansky
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Jason Hartke
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National Association of State Energy Officials

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Abundant Power

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Cc: Trent Bauserman, Council on Environmental Quality
Brandon Belford, National Economic Council
Don Graves, President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness
Richard Kauffman, U.S. Department of Energy
Molly Lunn, Council on Environmental Quality