



## A policy blueprint for mass-scale greening

- Green Jobs/Green Homes is a plan to greatly ramp-up South Carolina’s residential energy efficiency work – and help small businesses and non-profits.<sup>1</sup> It calls for performing fairly deep energy-efficiency improvements on hundreds of thousands of homes over the next five years. About 40% of the country’s fossil fuel emissions come from producing and using energy just to power our homes.
- **This policy will combat climate change, lower homeowner energy costs and create family-sustaining green jobs.**
- The biggest barrier to bringing residential energy efficiency to scale has been homeowners’ lack of upfront capital to pay for home retrofits. The Green Jobs/Green Homes public/private partnership will help raise private capital to cover those costs, which can be paid back over time by capturing the savings on residential utility bills.
- The state will use a relatively small amount of public money to raise enormous amounts of private capital. With this program, South Carolina’s green jobs won’t end when the federal stimulus money runs out. Workers trained for the Weatherization Assistance Program can transition into Green Jobs/Green Homes work – keeping people employed, and enabling us to reach our environmental goals.
- The best part: a program like this can be done with no on-budget cost to the state. Federal stimulus funds – or other streams – can provide the funds needed for workforce training, energy audits, program administration and a credit enhancement to leverage the private capital.
- Here’s how it works from a homeowner’s perspective:
  - Homeowner calls Green Jobs/Green Homes program to express interest;
  - Program sends out energy auditor;
  - Auditor proposes a menu of retrofit options to cut energy costs and provides a list of certified contractors who can do the work;
  - Green Jobs/Green Homes pays the contractor through a Residential Retrofit Investment Fund created with private and/or pension fund investments;
  - The homeowner’s utility bill plummets – the utility company keeps a portion to pay back the fund and a portion goes into the homeowner’s pocket.
- Participating contractors will see their business greatly expand – but they must be well-trained and certified, agree to pay family-sustaining wages, and agree to hire and train local workers; this program helps workers and creates opportunities for communities with high long-term joblessness.
- Legislation is needed to authorize the state to create the program, lay out the programs objectives (to maximize public benefit), and set up a fund to leverage private capital.

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<sup>1</sup> This proposal is based on *Green Jobs/Green Homes New York: Expanding home energy efficiency and creating good jobs in a clean energy economy*, a May 2009 policy blueprint created by the Center for Working Families. New York State passed legislation in October 2009 to create a program based on this report. South Carolina should craft a unique program to fit our needs, but this general model is worth borrowing from.

