

Congressman

Paul E. Kanjorski

Representing the 11th Congressional District of Pennsylvania

**POTENTIAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FROM THE
AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT**



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- Introduction.....Page 2
- Section I**
- Highways, Bridge & Transit Programs.....Page 3
- Section II**
- Water & Wastewater Infrastructure Programs.....Page 12
- Section III**
- Renewable & Clean Energy Programs.....Page 18
- Section IV**
- Education Programs.....Page 29
- Section V**
- Unemployment, Healthcare & Workforce Programs.....Page 35
- Section VI**
- Law Enforcement Programs.....Page 42
- Section VII**
- Firefighter Station Grants.....Page 48
- Section VIII**
- Economic & Community Development Programs..... Page 49
- Section IX**
- Flood Protection Programs.....Page 58
- Section X**
- Small Business Assistance.....Page 61
- Section XI**
- Consumer Tax Credits.....Page 64
- Section XII**
- Health Information Technology Programs.....Page 67

Introduction

Dear Friend:

The United States is currently facing the greatest economic crisis since the Great Depression. In an effort to jumpstart our economy, Congress passed and President Obama signed into law, H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Generally speaking, this legislation provides nearly \$800 billion in federal spending and tax cuts to create or save millions of jobs and provide assistance to Americans who are currently unemployed.

While the final recovery bill is not perfect, nor does it address all my concerns, I strongly believe that we needed to take quick action to help Americans who are struggling and help spur job creation. We are in a time of crisis, and doing nothing is not an option. I agree with President Obama - time is of the essence, and we needed to act quickly to pass a recovery package. The bill is estimated to create or save 3.5 million jobs throughout the country, including 143,000 jobs in the Commonwealth Pennsylvania and 7,800 jobs in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

Since the size and magnitude of the Recovery bill is so large, I have created this guidebook to serve as a starting point in providing information about what resources are available to individuals, businesses, community organizations and local governments. Its contents are by no means comprehensive and will be updated periodically as more details about specific programs become available.

The guidebook is comprised of 12 different sections providing information about what programs will be receiving recovery funds. In general, each section is sub-divided into what programs the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will administer and what programs the respective federal agencies will administer. In most cases, the Recovery Act provides for a federal cost share of 100%, meaning local entities will not have to match federal funding provided in the Recovery Act.

A provision in the Recovery Act requires the Executive Branch to maintain a website detailing where federal dollars will be spent and announcements on potential funding opportunities. In the coming days I strongly encourage you to visit <http://www.recovery.gov> for further information on how to access Recovery funds. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has created its own Recovery website and you can view its website at <http://www.recovery.pa.gov>. Furthermore, it is likely most grant, loan and contracting seekers will have to register their organization with the government to apply for funds. I encourage you to visit <http://www.grants.gov> and the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) website at <http://www.ccr.gov> to learn how to register your organization.

As always, I stand ready to assist you and hope the information provided in this guidebook proves useful to you. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please feel free to contact John Latini on my Washington, DC staff at (800) 222-2346.

Section I **Highways, Bridges & Transit**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 allocates more than \$27 billion for our nation's highways, bridges and transit systems. Nearly all of these funds will be distributed to the states based on existing formulas. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is estimated to receive \$1.8 billion as its federal share. The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) will administer the transportation funds. Approximately \$1 billion of the Commonwealth's share is for highways and bridges and \$340 million is for transit systems. Below is a summary of some of the federal and state transportation programs that will receive funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Federal Funds Administered by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (<http://www.dot.state.pa.us/>)
Official Pennsylvania Recovery Website (<http://www.recovery.pa.gov>)

Highways, Bridges and Transit **(\$1.8 billion)**

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) published its list of transportation projects that will receive Recovery funds on March 12, 2009. You can view which projects were selected by going to the PennDOT website at <http://www.dot.state.pa.us> and click the "Economic Recovery Projects" button in the bottom right corner.

PennDOT has submitted its project list for federal approval and pending approval, PennDOT is required to start awarding contracts within 120-180 days. If PennDOT fails to meet this condition, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation has the authority to redistribute any un-obligated funds to other states that have already obligated their federal share of funds.

The list of projects selected was developed in consultation with local Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO), and Rural Planning Organizations (RPO) and preference was given to projects already on the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). The Recovery Act also required when selecting projects to fund that priority be given to projects that can be completed within a 3-year period and located in an economically distressed area. Economically distressed area is defined as an area where the per capita income is 80% or less of the national average and where the recent unemployment rate is at least 1% greater than the national average.

Due to existing federal law, PennDOT is required to distribute a certain percentage of federal transportation funds to different areas of the state based on population. Knowing the Commonwealth will receive at least \$1 billion in highway and bridge funding and based on current estimations, PennDOT is required to spend \$181 million in urbanized areas, \$102 million in areas with populations between 5,000 and 200,000, \$24 million in

areas with populations under 5,000 and \$687 million in any area that meets its requirements.

All existing Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) rules and regulations will apply to Recovery Act funds that PennDOT receives. In an effort to expedite the spending of Recovery Act funds, FHWA has created a website to assist state and local agencies with implementing transportation projects. I strongly encourage you to visit the FHWA Economic Recovery website at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/economicrecovery/index.htm> for more information.

For your review, below I have provided a list of which projects are scheduled to receive funding in Pennsylvania’s 11th Congressional District.

Highway and Bridge Projects in PA-11

Carbon County Highway & Bridge Projects

<u>Project Title</u>	<u>Project Description</u>	<u>\$ Amount</u>
SR 209 Resurfacing	Resurfacing of State Route 209 from McCall Bridge through Lehighton in Carbon County	\$4,200,000

Columbia County Highway & Bridge Projects

<u>Project Title</u>	<u>Project Description</u>	<u>\$ Amount</u>
PA 42 over US 11 (Bridge)	Rehabilitation of State Route 42 bridge over State Route 11 at Bloomsburg in Montour Township	\$1,086,000
PA 42 Over Roaring Creek (Bridge)	Rehabilitation of State Route 42 over roaring Creek in Catawissa and Locust Townships	\$865,280
SR 2001 over Tributary of Roaring Creek (Bridge)	Rehabilitation of State Route 2001 over Tributary of Roaring Creek in Locust Townships	\$716,363
Sign Upgrades	Install and upgrade signs in Columbia, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder & Union Counties	\$80,000
<u>County Total:</u>	<u>\$2,747,643</u>	

Lackawanna County Highway & Bridge Projects

<u>Project Title</u>	<u>Project Description</u>	<u>\$ Amount</u>
Districtwide Resurfacing	Resurfacing on various State Routes in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties	\$5,310,215

Luzerne County Highway & Bridge Projects

<u>Project Title</u>	<u>Project Description</u>	<u>\$ Amount</u>
Districtwide Resurfacing	Resurfacing on various State Routes in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties	\$5,310,215
Cleveland St. Bridge	Replacement of Cleveland St. Bridge over Mill Creek in Plains Township	\$2,193,785
John S. Fine Bridge	Preservation of State Route 29 Bridge over Susquehanna River and State Route 29 Bridge over State Route 2002 (San Souci Highway) in Hanover Township	\$24,200,000
Sr 4001 & SR 4016 Bridges	Bridge Rehabilitation of State Route 4001 bridge over Branch of Lunlock Creek and State Route 4016 bridge over Marsh Creek in Plymouth, Huntington and Ross Townships	\$1,000,000
Interstate 81 Resurfacing	Resurfacing from Milepost 139-144 in Luzerne County	\$3,630,000
Interstate 81 Resurfacing	Resurfacing of I-81 Northbound and Southbound in Luzerne County	\$9,240,000
<u>County Total:</u>	<u>\$45,574,000</u>	

Monroe County Highway & Bridge Projects

<u>Project Title</u>	<u>Project Description</u>	<u>\$ Amount</u>
Interstate 80 Bridge Parapets	Replacement of Precast bridge parapets in Tunkhannock and Pocono Townships	\$3,289,000
Interstate 80 Bridge Parapets	Replacement of Precast bridge parapets in Pocono Township	\$7,190,000
Interstate 80 Bridge Parapets	Replacement of Precast bridge parapets in Stroud, Smithfield Townships, Stroudsburg and East Stroudsburg Boroughs	\$7,715,000
PA 33 Resurfacing	Resurfacing of State Route 33 and State Route 8017 on various segments in Hamilton Township	\$10,440,000
Monroe Bridge Preservation	Bridge Preservation of 10 bridges in various located in Monroe & Schuylkill Counties	\$3,840,000
<u>County Total:</u>	<u>\$32,474,000</u>	

PA-11 Highway & Bridge Projects Total

Total Highway & Bridge Projects	\$90,305,858
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Transit Projects in the PA-11**Carbon County Transit Funding**

<u>Project Title</u>	<u>Project Description</u>	<u>\$ Amount</u>
Replace four small buses and scheduling software	Replacement of scheduling software and to replace four small transit buses.	\$283,000

Luzerne County Transit Funding

<u>Project Title</u>	<u>Project Description</u>	<u>\$ Amount</u>
Intermodal Center	Construction of the Hazleton Intermodal Center.	\$631,377

Monroe County Transit Funding

<u>Project Title</u>	<u>Project Description</u>	<u>\$ Amount</u>
Security cameras, Vehicle location system, and transit buses	Purchase of security cameras, an automatic vehicle location system, and replacement of three small transit buses.	\$436,410

PA-11 Transit Projects Total

Total Transit Projects in the PA-11	\$1,350,787
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For more information about how PennDOT administered Recovery Funds, you should contact your local PennDOT Engineering District Office or you local MPO/RPO at the following contact information:

➤ **Columbia County**

PennDOT Engineering District 3-0

715 Jordan Ave

PO Box 218

Montoursville, PA 17754

Toll Free Phone: (877) 723-6830

Phone: (570) 368-8686

<http://www.dot.state.pa.us/PennDOT/Districts/district3.nsf/>

SEDA-COG RPO

Mr. Steve Herman

Phone: (570) 524-4491

Email: Sherman@seda-cog.org

<http://www.sed-cog.org/>

➤ **Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties**

PennDOT Engineering District 4-0
55 Keystone Industrial Park
Dunmore, PA 18512
Phone: (570) 963-4061
<http://www.dot.state.pa.us/pennDOT/districts/district4.nsf/>

Scranton/Wilkes-Barre MPO
Mr. Steve Pitoniak
Phone: (570) 963-6400
Email: spitoniak@lackawannacounty.org

➤ **Carbon and Monroe Counties**

PennDOT Engineering District 5-0
1002 Hamilton Street
Allentown, PA 18101
Phone: (610) 871-4100
<http://www.dot.state.pa.us/pennDOT/districts/district5.nsf/>

Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance
RPO
Mr. Alan Baranski
Phone: (570) 655-5581
Email: abaranski@nepa-alliance.org

Federal Transportation Programs

U.S. Department of Transportation (<http://www.dot.gov>)
Official Recovery Website (<http://www.dot.gov/recovery>)

Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER)

Discretionary Grants (\$1.5 billion)

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act appropriates \$1.5 billion for the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation to administer a supplemental discretionary grant program for surface transportation systems. These funds remain available through September 30, 2011.

This competitive grant program applies to projects that will have a significant impact on the Nation, a metropolitan area or region. Eligible projects include but are not limited to, highway or bridge projects eligible under title 23, including interstate rehabilitation, improvements to the rural collector road system, reconstruction of the overpasses and interchanges and public transportation projects eligible under chapter 53 of title 49.

Priority will be given to projects that require a contribution of federal funds in order to complete an overall financing package and to projects that can be completed within 3 years.

State and local governments or transit agencies are able to apply for funding under this program.

The minimum grant that can be awarded under this program is \$20 million and the maximum grant is \$300 million. The Secretary may waive the minimum grant size for the purpose of funding significant projects in smaller cities, regions or states as long as 20% of the funds are not awarded in a single state.

U.S. Department of Transportation is now accepting applications for this discretionary grant program for surface transportation projects. The deadline to submit an application is **September 15, 2009**.

For more information about how to apply for these funds, you should visit the U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary website at <http://www.dot.gov/recovery/ost/>.

In addition, you can contact the U.S. Department of Transportation at the following contact information:

U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590
TTY: (800) 877-8339
Voice: (866) 377-8642
VCO: (877) 877-6280
Website: <http://www.dot.gov/contact.html>

Federal Aviation Administration (<http://www.faa.gov/>)
Official Recovery Website (<http://www.faa.gov/recovery>)

Facilities and Equipment (\$200 million)

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$200 in supplemental funding for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to make infrastructure improvements.

Funds shall be used to make improvements to power systems, air route traffic control centers, air traffic control towers, terminal radar approach control facilities, and navigation and landing equipment. Priority will be given to projects that can be completed within 2 years.

60 days after enactment, the FAA Administrator is required to establish a process for applying, reviewing and awarding grants and cooperative agreements.

To date, no further details have been released about this program. I encourage you to visit the Official Recovery website listed above and <http://www.recovery.gov> in the coming days for more information.

Airport Improvement Program (Grants-In-Aid for Airports) (\$1.1 billion)

In an effort to repair and improve the nation's airports, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$1.1 billion for airport infrastructure. The Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation will administer the funds through a discretionary grant program.

Airports must be part of the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS) to be eligible for funding. Priority will be given to projects that can be completed within 2 years and serve to supplement and not supplant planned expenditures from airport-generated revenues or from other State and local sources. All projects must comply with subchapter 1 of chapter 471 and subchapter 1 of chapter 475 of title 49.

The Secretary is required to award 50% of the funds within 120 days of enactment and award the remaining amounts no later than 1 year after enactment.

Further information on how the FAA will be implementing the Airport Improvement Program can be found at the Official Recovery website listed above.

Federal Railroad Administration (<http://www.fra.dot.gov/>)
Official Recovery Website (<http://www.fra.dot.gov/us/content/2153>)

High Speed Rail Corridors & Intercity Rail (\$8 billion)

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will provide the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) \$8 billion to award discretionary grants to States to pay for the cost of high speed rail and intercity passenger rail projects. These funds are available through September 30, 2012 or until expended.

The Secretary of the U.S. Transportation will administer this grant program. Priority shall be given to projects that support the development of intercity high speed rail service. This will be a grant program that will fund infrastructure, facilities and equipment necessary for intercity high speed rail. In order to qualify for funds, a project must have any environmental work required by law and preliminary engineering complete. Projects must also demonstrate "independent utility," which means the project is usable and provides benefits even if no additional transportation improvements in the area are made. Guidance on how to apply, grant terms, conditions and procedure will be available 120 days after enactment.

To date, no further details have been released about this program. I encourage you to visit the Official Recovery website listed above and <http://www.recovery.gov> in the coming days for more information.

Federal Transit Administration (<http://www.fta.dot.gov/>)
Official Recovery Website (http://www.fta.dot.gov/index_9118.html)

Capitol Investment Grants (New Starts Program) (**\$750 million**)

The Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) discretionary New Starts program is the federal government's primary financial resource for supporting locally-planned, implemented, and operated transit "guideway" capital investments. From heavy to light rail, from commuter rail to bus rapid transit systems, the FTA's New Starts program has helped to make possible hundreds of new or extended transit fixed guideway systems across the country.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$750 million in discretionary grants for this program. Priority shall be given to projects that are currently in construction or are able to obligate funds within 150 days. These funds will remain available through September 30, 2012.

FTA is still determining the rules and regulations for administering these funds. I encourage you to visit the Official Recovery website listed above and <http://www.recovery.gov> in the coming days for more information. In addition, you can view the New Starts Program website at http://www.fta.dot.gov/about_FTA_9261.html or contact the Regional FTA Office if you have specific questions about this program.

FTA Philadelphia Regional Center
1760 Market Street
Suite 500
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Phone: (215) 656-7100
Fax: (215) 656-7260

Transit Investments for Greenhouse Gas & Energy Reduction (TIGGER)
(\$100 million)

TIGGER will provide grants to transit agencies for Capitol Projects that either reduce energy consumption or reduce greenhouse gas emissions of the agency. Criteria for

selecting projects to receive recovery funds will be based on the amount of energy reduction that a project will facilitate.

The deadline for TIGGER grant proposals to be submitted to the FTA is **May 22, 2009**. Proposals should be submitted to FTA-TIGGER@dot.gov. FTA requires that proposals must be for a minimum of \$2 million and no more than \$25 million. Transit agencies can jointly apply to meet the \$2 million minimum threshold.

For information about how to apply for these funds, you should visit the Official FTA Recovery website listed above. In addition, you can view the question and answer section for TIGGER at http://www.fta.dot.gov/index_9326.html#TIGGER for further guidance.

Section II
Water & Wastewater Infrastructure Funding

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act appropriates \$6.4 billion for water and wastewater management projects. Most of these funds are distributed to states based on existing formulas but the federal government will administer some of the funds through a competitive grant and loan program. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will receive \$222 million as its federal share. Below is a summary of some of the federal and states programs that will receive funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Federal Funds Administered by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority

<http://www.pennvest.state.pa.us>

Pennsylvania Official Recovery Website

<http://www.recovery.pa.gov>

Sewer, Storm and Drinking Water Projects **(\$222 million)**

\$156 million of the Commonwealth’s federal share is allocated for Clean Water projects and \$65 million is allocated for Clean Drinking Water projects. The Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PennVEST) will administer these federal funds.

Clean Water projects include all types of non-point source, watershed protection or restoration, estuary management projects and traditional municipal wastewater treatment projects. Clean Drinking Water projects include installation and replacement of failing treatment facilities, storage facilities and transmission and distribution systems that facilitate compliance with federal drinking water regulations. Projects to consolidate water supplies may also be eligible.

Priority will be given to projects that are already on the Commonwealth’s priority list and are ready to proceed to construction within 12 months. The Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to reallocate un-obligated funds that are not under contract or construction within 12 months.

For your review, below I have provided a list of which projects are scheduled to receive funding in Pennsylvania’s 11th Congressional District.

Drinking Water Projects in PA-11

Luzerne County Drinking Water Projects

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>Project Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Hazleton City	Grant to replace more than three miles of drinking water distribution mains, upgrade to pump station, replace a water storage tank and rebuild three water filters to reduce water leaks	\$12,500,000

Monroe County Drinking Water Projects

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>Project Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
East Stroudsburg Borough	Loan to replace water mains and other facilities to alleviate waterline breaks and water leakage problems	\$1,200,000

Wastewater Projects in PA-11**Carbon County Wastewater Projects in PA-11**

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>Project Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
East Penn Township	Loan and grant to construct a new wastewater collection and treatment system to eliminate the use of malfunctioning on-lot septic systems that are discharging untreated wastewater	\$36,000 Loan & \$3,800,000 Grant

Luzerne County Wastewater Projects in PA-11

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>Project Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Butler Township	Loan to construct approximately half a mile of sewer lines to eliminate discharges of inadequately treated sewage	\$406,000
Greater Hazleton Joint Sewer Authority	Loan to expand and upgrade its existing sewage treatment plant and rehabilitate four pump stations to reduce nitrogen and phosphorous discharges to comply with Chesapeake Bay requirements	\$33,600,000
Pittston City	Loan to replace existing combined sewers with approximately four miles of sanitary and storm sewers to eliminate the possibility of wet weather discharges and soil subsidence under buildings that overlay portions of the existing system	\$9,200,000
West Pittston Borough	Loan to construct more than a mile of new storm sewers and approximately three miles of sanitary sewers to reduce the discharge of raw sewage into the Susquehanna River	\$9,500,000

For more information about how to apply for these funds, you will need to contact your local PennVEST office at the following information:

➤ **Columbia County**

 PennVEST Region I

 Mr. David Henning, Regional Project Specialist, dahenning@state.pa.us

Phone: (717) 783-4490 / Fax: (717) 787-0804

➤ **Carbon, Lackawanna, Luzerne and Monroe Counties**

PennVEST Region IV

Mr. Mike Gallagher, Regional Project Specialist, mgallagher@state.pa.us

Phone: (717) 783-4488 / Fax: (717) 787-0804

U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (<http://www.hud.gov>)

Official Recovery Website

(<http://www.hud.gov/recovery>)

Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) (\$1 billion)

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development administers formula grants to entitled states, cities and counties to develop viable communities. \$1 billion has been allocated for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

Communities receiving CDBG funds are permitted to carry out a wide range of community development activities directed toward revitalizing neighborhoods, economic development, and providing improved community facilities and services.

An eligible activity under this grant program is the improvement of public facilities and privately-owned utilities. These improvements can include the costs of connecting existing residential structures to water/sewer lines and installing wells, septic tanks, septic fields. Priority will be given to projects that can award contracts based on bids within 120 days.

For more information about eligible CDBG activities, you can visit the following website: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/library/stateguide/>.

The following communities will receive a direct appropriation of CDBG funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. For information about how to apply for these funds, you will need to contact your local office at the following contact information:

➤ **Lackawanna County**

City of Scranton

Ms. Sara Hailstone, Executive Director, Office of Economic & Community Development

538 Spruce St., Suite 812

Scranton, PA 18503-1862

Phone: (570) 348-4216 / Fax: (570) 348-4123

➤ **Luzerne County**

Luzerne County

Andrew Reilly, Director

Department of Community Development

54 W. Union St.

Wilkes Barre, PA 18711

Phone: (570) 824-7214

Fax: (570) 829-2910

City of Hazleton

Mr. Samuel D. Monticello, Director

Office of Community Development

40 N. Church St.

Hazleton, PA 18201

Phone: (570) 459-4965

Fax: (570) 459-6597

City of Wilkes-Barre

Mr. Kurt S. Sauer, Director
Department of Economic and Community Development
City Hall
40 E. Market St.
Wilkes Barre, PA 18711

Phone: (570) 208-4135 / Fax: (570) 208-4136

The federal government provides CDBG funds to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to distribute to eligible communities. For information about how to apply for these funds, you will need to contact your local office at the following contact information:

➤ **Carbon County**

Office of Planning & Development

76 Susquehanna Street
Jim Thorpe, PA 18229
Contact: Mary Phyllis Bolton, Assistant
Director
Phone: (570) 325-3303
Fax: (570) 325-4080
Email: marybolton@carboncounty.net

Tamaqua Borough

320 E. Broad Street
Tamaqua, PA 18252
Contact: Kevin Steigerwalt, Borough
Manager
Phone: (570) 668-0300
Fax: (570) 668-5818
Email: ksteigerwalt@verizon.net

➤ **Columbia County**

Town of Bloomsburg & Berwick
Borough

c/o SEDA-COG
201 Furnace Rd
Lewisburg, PA 17837
Contact: Bill Lowthert, Program Analyst
Phone: (570) 524-4491
Fax: (570) 524-9190
Email: wlowthert@seda-cog.org

Columbia County

c/o Columbia Co. Redevelopment
Authority
700 Sawmill Rd., Suite 101
Columbia, PA 17815
Contact: Lori Gordner, Housing/CD
Specialist
Phone: (570) 784-9373
Fax: (570) 387-8806
Email:
lgordner@columbiacountyhousing.com

➤ **Monroe County**

Monroe County & Redevelopment
Authority

15 S. Courtland St.
East Stroudsburg, PA 18360
Contact: Raymond Guernsey, Executive
Director
Phone: (570) 421-4300
Fax: (570) 420-9414
Email: rehab@enter.net

East Stroudsburg Borough

P.O. Box 303, Municipal Building
East Stroudsburg, PA 18301
Contact: James S. Phillips, Borough
Manager
Phone: (570) 421-8300

➤ **Lackawanna County**

Office of Economic & Community Development

Scranton Electric Building
507 Linden Street, 5th Floor
Scranton, PA 18503

Contact: Glenn Pelino, Executive Director
Phone: (570) 963-6830 / Fax: (570) 963-6878

➤ **Luzerne County**

City of Nanticoke

15 E. Ridge St
Nanticoke, PA 18634
Contact: Kenneth Johnson, City
Administrator
Phone: (570) 735-2800
Fax: (570) 735-7817

City of Pittston

Office of Community Development
35 Broad Street
City Hall, Pittston, PA 18640
Contact: Gerald J. Mullarkey, CD
Manager
Phone: (570) 654-4601
Fax: (570) 602-9261

Federal Water & Wastewater Programs

U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>

Official Recovery Website

<http://www.usda.gov/recovery>

Rural Water & Environmental Programs

(\$1.38 billion)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Department administers a grant and loan program for water and wastewater infrastructure projects in rural areas, cities and towns with populations of 10,000 or less. This program will receive \$1.38 billion in Recovery Act funding.

Eligible projects include but are not limited to drinking water, sanitary sewer, solid waste and storm drainage facilities. Public entities or non-profit organizations may qualify for assistance. Grants are also made to non-profit organizations to provide technical assistance and training to assist rural communities with their water, wastewater, and solid waste problems.

For more information about this program, you can visit the USDA Rural Development website at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov> or <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/pa/>.

In order to apply for these funds, you will need to contact your local office at the following contact information:

➤ ***Carbon and Monroe Counties***

Lehigh Area Office
2211 Mack Blvd.
Allentown, PA 18103-5623
Phone: (610) 791-9810
Fax: (610) 791-9820

➤ ***Columbia County***

Lycoming Area Office
542 County Farm Road, Suite 205
Montoursville, PA 17754-9209
Phone: (570) 433-3006, ext. 4
Fax: (570) 433-3013

➤ ***Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties***

Wyoming Area Office
One Hollowcrest Complex
Tunkhannock, PA 18657-6632
Phone: (570) 836-5111, ext. 4
Fax: (570) 836-4432

U.S. Department of Commerce (<http://www.commerce.gov/>)
Official Recovery Website (<http://www.commerce.gov/recovery>)

Public Works & Economic Development Program

The U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) administers several grant programs to help promote economic development.

The Public Works and Economic Development Program makes investments to help support the construction or rehabilitation of essential public infrastructure and facilities necessary to generate or retain private sector jobs and investments, attract private sector capital, and promote regional competitiveness, including investments that expand and upgrade infrastructure to attract new industry, support technology-led development, redevelop brownfield sites and provide eco-industrial development.

For more information about how to apply for these funds, you will need to contact your local EDA office at the following contact information:

Philadelphia Regional Office

The Curtis Center
601 Walnut Street, Suite 140 South
Philadelphia, PA 19106-3821
Phone: (215) 597-4603
Fax: (215) 597-1063
Website: <http://www.eda.gov/>

Section III **Renewable & Clean Energy Programs**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides investments in areas critical to the development of clean and efficient, American energy. The Recovery Act allocates \$16.8 billion for various programs within the U.S. Department of Energy. Most of the funds are specified for the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE). EERE works to strengthen the United State's energy security, environmental quality, and economic vitality in public-private partnerships by supporting enhancements in energy efficiency and productivity; bringing clean, reliable and affordable energy technologies to the marketplace and enhancing Americans energy choices. You can visit EERE's website at <http://www.eere.energy.gov/> to learn more about the agency. Below is a summary of some of the federal and state programs that will receive funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Federal Funds Administered by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

(<http://www.depweb.state.pa.us>)

Through EERE's Weatherization & Intergovernmental Program the following funds will be distributed to the states three different programs:

Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants **(\$3.2 billion)**

The program is designed to reduce energy use and fossil fuel emission, and for improvements in energy efficiency.

Each state is required to pass on 60% of its funding share to cities and counties not receiving direct formula funding.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania State Energy Office will administer these funds. For information about what programs will receive funding and how to apply, you should contact the Pennsylvania Office of Energy and Technology Deployment at the following contact information:

Pennsylvania Office of Energy and Technology Deployment

Department of Environmental Protection

P.O. Box 8772

Harrisburg, PA 17105-8772

Phone: (717) 783-0540

Fax: (717) 783-0546

Website: <http://www.depweb.state.pa.us/energy/cwp/view.asp?a=3&q=482723>

Weatherization Assistance Program **(\$5 billion)**

The Weatherization Assistance Program enables low-income families to permanently reduce their energy bills by making their homes more energy efficient. By reducing the energy bills of low-income families instead of offering aid, weatherization reduces dependency and liberates these funds for spending on more pressing family issues. On average, weatherization reduces heating bills by 32% and overall energy bills.

The Weatherization Assistance Program has an income requirement and you should check with your County office to determine eligibility. Further details can be found at <http://www.newpa.com/strengthen-your-community/redeveloping-your-community/housing/weatherization/index.aspx>.

The Commonwealth's federal share is estimated to be \$258 million. For more information about how to apply for these funds, you will need to contact your County office at the following contact information:

Carbon County Action Committee for Human Services

267 South Second Street
Lehighton, PA 18235-1412
Phone: (610) 377-6400
Fax: (610) 377-3431

Lackawanna County Scranton/Lackawanna Human Development Agency

321 Spruce Street, 1st Floor
Scranton, PA 18503
Phone: (570) 963-6836 Ext. 2296 or 2249
Fax: (570) 496-7713

Monroe County Weatherization Program

P.O. Box 66
Tannersville, PA 18372
Phone: (570) 421-4436
Fax: (570) 420-9414

Keystone HELP

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania administers a special loan and rebate program for energy efficiency home improvements. This program is referred to as the Keystone Home Energy Loan Program (HELP).

This program allows Pennsylvania homeowners to improve the energy efficiency of their homes with special financing and rebates for high efficiency heating, air conditioning,

Columbia County

SEDA-Council of Governments
201 Furnace Road
Lewisburg, PA 17837
Toll Free Phone: (800) 332-6701
Phone: (570) 524-4491 Ext. 220
Fax: (570) 524-5902

Luzerne County

Commission on Economic Opportunity of Luzerne County

P.O. Box 1127
165 Amber Lane
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18703
Phone: (570) 826-0510
Fax: (570) 829-1665

insulation, windows, doors, geothermal and “whole house” improvements using Home Performance with Energy Star.

Pennsylvania homeowners who own and are making qualifying improvements to their primary residence and whose combined annual household income is \$150,000 or less are eligible to apply for a loan or rebate under the Keystone HELP program. If your combined income is more than \$150,000, special program rates and terms may be available and you should contact the program for details.

For more information about this program, you visit the Keystone HELP website at <http://www.keystonehelp.com/index.php>. You can apply for these funds online at <http://www.keystonehelp.com/apply/application.php>. If you do not have access to the internet, you can apply by calling (888) 232-3477.

State Energy Program **(\$3.4 billion)**

The State Energy Program (SEP) provides grants to states and directs funding to state energy offices from technology programs in U.S. Department of Energy’s Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE). States use grants to address their energy priorities and program funding to adopt emerging renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies. This program gives each state flexibility on setting its own priorities on what projects to fund. The Commonwealth will receive an estimated \$100 million as its federal share. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will administer these funds.

The primary program the Commonwealth uses these federal funds for is the Pennsylvania Energy Harvest Grant. The goal of this program is to deploy cleaner energy sources that protect water or air quality, and have a positive economic benefit. It provides funding for renewable energy deployment; biomass energy project; coal-mine methane, waste coal reclamation for energy; implementation of innovative energy efficiency technologies; or clean distributed generation infrastructure improvements. Energy Harvest is not a research initiative.

For information about how to apply for these funds, you can view the Energy Harvest website at <http://www.depweb.state.pa.us/energy/cwp/view.asp?a=1374&q=483024>.

In addition, because the Commonwealth has some discretion on which programs receive a portion of these federal funds, I encourage you visit Pennsylvania’s Recovery website at <http://www.recovery.pa.gov>, the Department of Environmental Protection’s (DEP) website at <http://www.dep.state.pa.us/grantscenter/> or call (717) 705-5400 to learn about its entire energy grant and loan programs.

Federal Renewable & Clean Energy Programs

U.S. Department of Energy (<http://www.energy.gov>)
Official Recovery Website (<http://www.energy.gov/recovery>)

Biomass Program (\$800 million)

The Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy's Biomass Program works with industry, academia, and our national laboratory partners on a balanced portfolio of research in biomass feedstocks and conversion technologies. Through research, development, and demonstration efforts geared toward the development of integrated biorefineries, the Biomass Program is helping transform the nation's renewable and abundant biomass resources into cost competitive, high performance biofuels, bioproducts, and biopower.

To date, no further details have been released about potential funding opportunities. I encourage you to visit the Biomass Program website at <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/biomass/> and the Official U.S. Department of Energy Recovery website at <http://www.energy.gov/recovery/> in the coming days for more information.

Geothermal Technologies (\$400 million)

The Geothermal Technologies Program (GTP) develops innovative geothermal energy technologies to find, access, and use the Nation's geothermal resources. Through research, development, and demonstration efforts that emphasize the advancement of enhanced geothermal systems (EGS), GTP is working to provide the United States with an abundant, clean, renewable baseload energy source.

The Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy announced that new geothermal technology opportunities will be made available through <http://www.grants.gov>. I encourage you to visit the Geothermal Technologies Program website at <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/geothermal/> and the Official U.S. Department of Energy Recovery website at <http://www.energy.gov/recovery/> in the coming days for more information.

Vehicle Technologies (\$400 million)

Vehicle Technologies Program professionals work with industry leaders to develop and deploy advanced transportation technologies that could achieve significant improvements in vehicle fuel efficiency and displace oil with other fuels that ultimately can be domestically produced in a clean and cost-competitive manner. Program activities include research, development, demonstration, testing, technology validation, technology transfer, and education.

To date, no details have been released about potential funding opportunities. I encourage you to visit the Office Vehicle Technologies website at <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/vehiclesandfuels/> and the Official U.S. Department of

Energy Recovery website at <http://www.energy.gov/recovery/> in the coming days for more information.

Office of Electricity Delivery & Energy Reliability (\$4.5 billion)

The mission of the Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability (OE) is to lead national efforts to modernize the electric grid; enhance security and reliability of the energy infrastructure; and facilitate recovery from disruptions to energy supply.

Whether it is on the supply side, to enable the delivery of clean energy sources such as renewables, clean coal, and nuclear power, or on the demand side, in developing a new smart grid and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles, OE is working to ensure our grid retains its standing as the most effective and efficient in the world.

To date, no further details have been released about potential funding opportunities. I encourage you to visit the Office of Electricity Delivery & Energy Reliability websites at <http://www.oe.energy.gov/> & <http://www.oe.energy.gov/ourwork.htm> and the Official U.S. Department of Energy Recovery website at <http://www.energy.gov/recovery/> in the coming days for more information.

Fossil Energy Research and Development (\$3.4 billion)

The Energy Department's Fossil Energy organization is made up of about 1,000 scientists, engineers, technicians and administrative staff.

The Office of Fossil Energy is responsible for several high-priority initiatives including implementation of the \$2 billion, 10-year Clean Coal Power Initiative to develop a new generation of environmentally sound clean coal technologies, and the nation's Strategic Petroleum Reserve and Northeast Home Heating Oil Reserve, both key emergency response tools available to the President to protect Americans from energy supply disruptions.

To date, no further details have been released about this program. I encourage you to visit the Office of Fossil Energy websites at <http://www.fossil.energy.gov/> & http://www.fossil.energy.gov/business/Business_Opportunities.html and the Official U.S. Department of Energy Recovery website at <http://www.energy.gov/recovery/> in the coming days for more information.

Advanced Research Projects Agency (\$400 million)

The Advanced Research Projects Agency – Energy (ARPA-E) is an Agency within the Department of Energy. ARPA-E will fund energy technology projects that translate scientific discoveries and cutting-edge inventions into technological innovations, and it will also accelerate technological advances in high-risk areas that industry is not likely to pursue independently.

It will *not* fund improvements to existing technologies; this research will continue to be supported through existing Dept. of Energy programs, such as those of the Dept. of Energy Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. ARPA-E's mission will be

to develop new energy technologies that offer significant progress toward reducing imported energy; reducing energy-related emissions, including greenhouse gases; and improving energy efficiency.

To learn how to apply for these funds, you should visit the ARPA-E funding announcement at http://www.energy.gov/news2009/documents2009/ARPA-E_FOA.pdf. The last day to submit an application for this program is June 2, 2009.

For more information on this program, please visit the Department of Energy Recovery website at www.energy.gov/recovery.

Transportation Electrification Grants **(\$400 million)**

The Department of Energy (DOE) National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL), on behalf of the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy's (EERE) Office of Vehicle Technologies (OVT) Program, is seeking applications for grants to establish development, demonstration, evaluation, and education projects to accelerate the market introduction and penetration of advanced electric drive vehicles. DOE's goal is for the vehicles and electric technologies to achieve a fast market introduction and reach high volume production.

A key objective of the OVT program is to accelerate the development and production of various electric drive vehicle systems to substantially reduce petroleum consumption. One of the electric drive technologies that will be emphasized in this project are Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEV), which directly supports the President's goal to Get One Million Plug-In Hybrid Cars on the Road by 2015. Furthermore, advanced electric drive technologies will allow manufacturers to meet increased fuel economy standards while reducing vehicular emissions of greenhouse gases. The resulting grants will also meaningfully aid in the nation's economic recovery by creating US based jobs as outlined in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

Applications for this program are due no later than May 13, 2009. To learn how to apply for this program, you should visit <https://www.fedconnect.net/FedConnect/> and search Reference number [DE-FOA-0000028](https://www.fedconnect.net/FedConnect/). For more information, I encourage you to visit <http://www.energy.gov/recovery/>.

Energy Efficiency and Conservation Grants **(\$3.2 billion)**

The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program (EECBG) provides grants to U.S. local governments, states, territories, and Indian tribes, to fund projects that reduce energy use and fossil fuel emissions, as well as improve energy efficiency. Congress appropriated \$3.2 billion for the EECBG Program, most of which will be distributed through formula grants.

State and Local entities are encouraged to apply for funding by June 25, 2009. For more information on this program please go to Department of Energy's website on the grant at <http://www.eecbg.energy.gov/>.

Green Retrofit Program for Multifamily Housing **(\$250 million)**

The Green Retrofit Program is a new program to provide funding for energy and green retrofit investments to certain, eligible assisted, affordable multifamily properties, including incentives for participating property owners, a set-aside for administrative functions, and a set-aside for due diligence and underwriting support. Assistance will be for specific retrofit purposes.

Program will offer up to \$15,000 per residential unit to reduce energy costs, cut water consumption, and improve indoor air quality. Eligible applications must be already assisted by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through Section 8 project-based rental assistance or the Department's Section 202 (elderly) and Section 811 (disabled) programs. Applications for this program will be accepted beginning on June 15, 2009.

To learn how to apply for this program, you should visit the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) website at <https://www.cfda.gov> and search Program Number 14.318.

For more information about this program, you should visit the HUD recovery website at <http://www.hud.gov/recovery>.

Transportation Electrification Grants **(\$400 million)**

This program will be distributed as grants that either encourage the use of plug-in electric drive vehicles or for projects that implement electric transportation technologies that would significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the use of petroleum. Funding would go directly to states, local governments, air pollution control districts, metropolitan transportation authorities, or non-profits; however, a minimum of one-third of the funding must go to local governments.

Applications for this program are due no later than May 15, 2009. For more information I encourage you to visit the Department of Energy Recovery website at <http://www.energy.gov/recovery/>.

Energy Efficiency and Conservation Grants **(\$3.2 billion)**

The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program (EECBG) provides grants to U.S. local governments, states, territories, and Indian tribes, to fund projects that reduce energy use and fossil fuel emissions, and that improve energy efficiency.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act appropriated \$3.2 billion for the EECBG Program, most of which (over \$2.7 billion) will be distributed through formula grants. The balance includes nearly \$455 million for competitive grants, which will be awarded through a separate Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) coming soon.

State and Local entities are encouraged to apply for funding by June 25, 2009. For more information on this program, please go to <http://www.eecbg.energy.gov/>.

Renewable & Clean Energy Bond & Tax Credit Programs

Clean Renewable Energy Bonds (CREBs) (\$1.6 billion)

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 created a tax-credit bond to finance qualified renewable energy facilities. These bonds are unique because unlike normal bonds, CREBs are tax credit bonds and they pay the bondholders by providing a credit against their federal income tax. In effect, the CREBs will provide interest-free financing for certain renewable energy projects. Since the federal government essentially pays the interest via tax credits, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) needs to allocate such credits in advance to the lending authorities.

Qualified facilities are those that generate electricity from the following sources: solar; wind; closed-loop biomass' open-loop biomass' geothermal' small irrigation; hydropower; landfill gas; marine renewable; and trash combustion facilities.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act authorizes an additional \$1.6 billion for these bonds. Furthermore, this new authorization is subdivided into thirds: 1/3 will be available for qualifying projects of State/local/tribal governments; 1/3 for qualifying projects of public power providers; and 1/3 for qualifying projects of electric cooperatives.

The following website provides guidance on how the program was previously administered: http://www.irs.gov/irb/2009-06_IRB/ar09.html.

To date, no further details have been released about this program. I encourage you to visit the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Official Recovery website at <http://www.irs.gov/recovery> and <http://www.recovery.gov> in the coming days for more information. If you do not have access to the internet, you can call the IRS toll free at (800) 829-1040.

Qualified Energy Conservation Bonds (\$2.4 billion)

The Qualified Energy Conservation Bonds are tax credit bonds that are similar to Clean Renewable Energy Bonds. These bonds are available for a different type of qualified renewable energy project.

The definition of qualified energy conservation projects is fairly broad and contains elements relating to energy efficiency capital expenditures in public buildings; renewable energy production; various research and development applications; mass commuting facilities that reduce energy consumption; several types of energy-related demonstration projects; and public energy efficiency education campaigns.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$2.4 billion and modifies this bond program. Upon implementation of the Recovery Act changes, qualified energy conservation bonds may be issued to make loans and grants for capital expenditures to put into action green community programs and can be used for programs in which

utilities provide ratepayers with energy-efficient property and recoup the costs of that property over an extended period of time.

To date, no further details have been released about this program. I encourage you to visit the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Official Recovery website at <http://www.irs.gov/recovery> in the coming days for more information. If you do not have access to the internet, you can call the IRS toll free at (800) 829-1040.

ENERGY STAR Tax Credits

ENERGY STAR is a joint program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy helping individuals and families save money and protect the environment through energy efficient products and practices. The existing law provides a tax credit equal to 10% of the amount paid or incurred by the taxpayer for qualified energy efficiency improvements installed during the taxable year. The credit is capped depending on what item is purchased. Congress must reauthorize these tax credits periodically.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act extends these tax credits through 2010. In addition, it increases the amount of the tax credit to 30% of qualified energy efficiency improvements during the taxable year. Furthermore, this legislation implements a flat tax credit rate cap of \$1,500 on all qualifying purchases.

For information on what home improvements qualify for this tax credit and how to access these credits, you will need to visit the ENERGY STAR website at <http://www.energystar.gov> or call the ENERGY STAR Hotline at (888) 782-7937.

Alternative Fuel Vehicle Refueling Property

The alternative refueling property credit provides a tax credit to businesses (example: gas stations) and individuals that install alternative fuel pumps, such as fuel pumps that dispense E-85 fuel, electricity, hydrogen, and natural gas.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act increases the current 30% alternative refueling property credit for businesses (capped at \$30,000) to 50% (capped at \$50,000). Hydrogen refueling pumps would remain at a 30% credit; however, the cap for hydrogen refueling pumps is increased to \$200,000. In addition, the Recovery Act increases the alternative refueling property credit for individuals from 30% to 50% (capped at \$2,000).

In previous years, individuals who were seeking this tax credit had to submit an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 8911 when they filed their taxes. The following website provides guidance on how the tax credit was administered in 2007, http://www.irs.gov/irb/2007-22_IRB/ar10.html.

I encourage you to visit the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Official Recovery website at <http://www.irs.gov/recovery> and <http://www.recovery.gov> in the coming days for more information. If you do not have access to the internet, you can call the IRS toll free at (800) 829-1040.

Plug-in Electric Drive Vehicle Credit

Late last year, Congress passed into a law a tax credit for qualified plug-in electric drive vehicles. Batteries of at least 4 kWh qualify for a \$2,500 credit. An additional \$417 is provided for each additional kWh, up to \$7,500 for vehicles up to 10,000 lbs. Vehicles up to 14,000 lbs qualify for a \$10,000 credit. Vehicles between 14,000 and 26,000 lbs qualify for a \$12,500 credit. Vehicles over 26,000 lbs qualify for a \$15,000 credit.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act modifies this existing law by limiting the maximum credit to \$7,500 regardless of vehicle weight and eliminates the credit for vehicles weighing 14,000 lbs or more.

In previous years, individuals applying for this tax credit were required to file an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 8834 when filing their tax returns. This same form, revised in February 2009, can be filed with 2008 tax returns. The IRS will be issuing a May 2009 revision of Form 8834 under a new title, the Qualified Electric and Plug-In Electric Vehicle Credit, to incorporate the new modifications. Filers whose fiscal year ends after February 16, 2009 must file the May 2009 revised Form 8834. All others who qualify can file either form. A copy of this form and further guidance can be found at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8834.pdf>.

I encourage you to visit the Official IRS Recovery website at <http://www.irs.gov/recovery> and <http://www.recovery.gov> for more information. If you do not have access to the internet, you can call the IRS toll free at (800) 829-1040.

Advanced Energy Investment Credit **(\$2.3 billion)**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act establishes a new 30% investment tax credit for facilities engaged in the manufacturing of advanced energy project.

A qualified advanced energy project is project that re-equips, expands, or establishes a manufacturing facility for the production of property designed to be used:

- To produce energy from the sun, wind, or geothermal deposits or other renewable resources
- Fuel cells, microturbines, or an energy storage system for use with electric or hybrid-electric motor vehicles
- Electric grids to support the transmission of intermittent sources of renewable energy, including storage of such energy
- Property designed to capture and sequester carbon dioxide
- Property designed to refine or blend renewable fuels (excluding fossil) or to produce energy conservation technologies
- Other advanced energy property designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as determined by the Secretary

Qualified property must be depreciable property used in a qualified advanced energy project. Qualified property does not include property designed to manufacture equipment for use in the refining or blending of any transportation fuel other than renewable fuels.

Credits are only available for projects certified by the Secretary of Treasury & Secretary of Energy through a competitive bidding process. 180 days after enactment, the Secretary of Treasury must establish a certification program.

To date, no further details are available about this program. I encourage you to visit the U.S. Department of the Treasury Official Recovery website at <http://www.ustreas.gov/recovery>, the U.S. Department of Energy Official Recovery website at <http://www.energy.gov/recovery> and the IRS Official Recovery website at <http://www.irs.gov/recovery> in the coming days for more information. If you do not have access to the internet, you can call the IRS toll free at (800) 829-1040.

Parity for Transit Benefits

Current law provides a tax-free fringe benefits employers can provide to employees for transit and parking. Those benefits are set at different dollar amounts.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act would equalize the tax-benefit employers can provide for transit and parking. The proposal sets both the parking and transit benefits at \$230 a month for 2009, indexes them equally for 2010, and clarifies that certain transit benefits apply to federal employees.

For information about how the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) administered this program in 2008, you can view IRS Publican 15-B at http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p15b_08.pdf.

To date, no further details have been released about this program for 2009. I encourage you to visit the IRS Official Recovery website at <http://www.irs.gov/recovery> in the coming days for more information. If you do not have access to the internet, you can call the IRS toll-free at (800) 829-1040.

designed to increase aid to LEAs with the highest concentrations of poverty, and a factor to increase grants to states with high levels of expenditure equity among their LEAs.

For more information about how to receive funds, you will need to contact the Pennsylvania Department of Education at the following contact information:

Pennsylvania Department of Education

333 Market Street

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17126-0333

Phone: (717) 783-6788

Website: <http://www.pde.state.pa.us/>

Recovery Website: <http://www.pde.state.pa.us/stimulus>

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title II, Part D (\$650 million)

The Title II, Part D of ESEA provides funding for education technology. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$650 million for this program. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is estimated to receive \$25.4 million.

These funds are used to increase access to educational technology, support the integration of technology into instruction, enhance technological literacy, and support technology-related professional development of teachers.

At least 95% of these funds must be allocated by the state department of education to LEAs (school districts). 50% of the funds will be distributed by formula, in proportion to Title I, Part A grants, and 50% will be award competitively. As a result, school districts will have to apply to receive a portion of these funds.

For more information about how to receive funds, you will need to contact the Pennsylvania Department of Education at the contact information listed above.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (\$11.8 billion)

IDEA is the major federal statute that supports special education and related services for children with disabilities. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$11.8 billion. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is estimated to receive \$438.3 million in IDEA funding.

As a condition of accepting IDEA funding, the act requires that states and LEAs provide a free appropriate public education to each eligible child with a disability. The IDEA is divided into four parts. Part A contains the general provisions, including the purposes of the act and definitions. Part B, the most often discussed part of the act, contains provisions relating to the education of school aged children (grants to states) and a state grant program for preschool children with disabilities (Section 619). Part C authorizes state grants for programs serving infants and toddlers with disabilities, while Part D contains the requirements for various national activities designed to improve the education of children with disabilities.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides funding to states for Part B and Part C of IDEA.

For more information about how to receive funds, you will need to contact the Pennsylvania Department of Education at the following contact information:

Pennsylvania Department of Education

333 Market Street

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17126-0333

Phone: (717) 783-6788

Website: <http://www.pde.state.pa.us/>

Recovery Website: <http://www.pde.state.pa.us/stimulus>

State Education Stabilization **(\$1.6 billion)**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act created a state stabilization fund to provide money directly to states to prevent education-related layoffs, upgrade, repair and modernize schools and restore harmful cuts to education funding. The Act provides \$53.6 billion for this fund. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is estimated to receive \$1.9 billion in stabilization funds, \$1.6 of which will be used specifically for education.

Stabilization funding will be provided directly to the Governor of each state. Governor Rendell has proposed dividing the \$1.6 billion in education funds to one-time school grants to school districts (\$317 million), restoring higher education funds (\$44 million) and providing substantial funding to school districts based on Pennsylvania's school funding program (\$1.15 billion).

One-time school grants to School Districts **(\$317 million)**

One-time grants for school districts can be used for modernization and renovation of school facilities, basic education and special education programs, career and technical education, and adult and family literacy.

Modernization funds can not be used for construction of new schools, payment of maintenance costs, facilities primarily used for athletic contests or for which admission is charged to the general public, the purchase or upgrade of vehicles, or any other purposes that are not directed at the education of children.

The Department of Education recommends that school districts aim to use this funding for one-time expenditures that can be funded within two years.

Applications and further information on these one-time grants are available at <http://www.pde.state.pa.us/stimulus>.

Restoring Higher Education Funds **(\$44 million)**

The Governor has proposed allocating \$44 million in FY2009-10 and an additional \$44 million on FY2010-11 for higher education funding.

To date, no further information has been released on how these funds will be implemented. In the coming days, I encourage you to visit the Official Department of Education Recovery website at <http://www.pde.state.pa.us/stimulus> and the Official Pennsylvania Recovery website at <http://www.recovery.pa.gov> for further updates.

Pennsylvania's School Funding Formula Program **(\$1.15 billion)**

The Governor has allocated \$1.15 billion of the \$1.6 billion provided for education stabilization to go toward the pre-existing school funding program that provides financial assistance to school districts throughout the Commonwealth based on a school funding formula. Originally enacted in July 2008, the formula aims to meet an adequate funding level for all school districts throughout the Commonwealth based on the amount of resources they need for students to succeed.

The Governor has proposed an allocation \$418 million for FY2009-10 and \$735 million for FY2010-11.

The proposed FY2009-10 formula allocations are available online at the Department of Education's website. To review the proposed allocations, and for further details on how formula funds can be used by individual school districts, I encourage you to visit the Official Department of Education Recovery website <http://www.pde.state.pa.us/stimulus>.

Funds Administered by the U.S. Department of Education

U.S. Department of Education **(<http://www.ed.gov>)**

Official Recovery Website **(<http://www.ed.gov/recovery>)**

Federal Pell Grant Funding **(\$15.64 billion)**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act increases the maximum Pell Grant to \$5,350 for the 2009-2010 school year and to \$5,550 for the 2010-2011 school year.

Under the Federal Pell Grant program, Pell Grants are made available to low-income undergraduate students to help offset their costs associated with obtaining a postsecondary education. The Pell Grant program is the largest source of federal grant aid to postsecondary students. Pell Grants are portable, in that the grant aid follows students to the eligible postsecondary education institutions in which they enroll.

The Pell Grant award amount is primarily based on the financial resources that a student and the student's family are expected to contribute toward postsecondary education expenses—the student's expected family contribution (EFC). The Pell Grant award is considered to be the foundation of a student's financial aid package because all other forms of federal student aid (e.g., federal student loans) are awarded after the Pell Grant award amount has been determined.

Financial need is determined by the U.S. Department of Education using a standard formula, established by Congress, to evaluate the financial information reported on the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA) and to determine the family EFC.

The deadline for filing the FAFSA for the 2009-2010 school year is **June 30, 2009**. To learn more and download a copy of the FAFSA, visit the Department of Education website at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

Higher Education Tax Credit

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act creates a new “American Opportunity” tax credit of up to \$2,500 of the cost of tuition and related expenses paid during the taxable year.

Under this new tax credit, taxpayers will receive a tax credit based on one hundred percent of the first \$2,000 of tuition and related expenses (including books) paid during the taxable year and twenty-five percent of the next \$2,000 of tuition and related expenses paid during the taxable year. Forty percent of the credit would be refundable. This tax credit will be subject to a phase-out for taxpayers with adjusted gross income in excess of \$80,000 or \$160,000 for married couples filing jointly.

To date, no further details have been released about this program. I encourage you to visit the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Official Recovery website at www.irs.gov/recovery and www.recovery.gov in the coming days for more information. If you do not have access to the internet, you can call the IRS toll-free at (800) 829-1040.

Education Infrastructure Financial Tools

Qualified School Construction Bonds **(\$22 billion)**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act creates a new category of tax credit bonds for the construction, rehabilitation, or repair of public school facilities or for the acquisition of land on which a public school facility will be constructed. Up to \$22 billion in qualified school construction bonds that may be issued by State and local governments with half allocated in 2009 and the remainder allocated in 2010. Forty percent of the bonds will be available to the largest school districts in the country.

To date, no further details have been released about this program. I encourage you to visit the U.S. Department of Education’s Official Recovery website at <http://www.ed.gov/recovery>, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) website at <http://www.irs.gov/recovery> and <http://www.recovery.gov> in the coming days for more information.

Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZABs) **(\$1.4 billion)**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act would allow an additional \$1.4 billion of Qualified Zone Academy Bond issuing authority to State and local governments in 2009 and 2010, which can be used to finance renovations, equipment purchases, developing course material, and training teachers and personnel at a qualified zone academy.

QZABs are financial instruments that local education agencies sell to finance school renovation and modernization. The interest on these bonds is paid by the federal government through tax credits to the bondholder. The bondholders are allowed to apply the credits to their federal corporate income tax or alternative minimum tax liability.

Eligible schools include:

- public schools that are either located in an Empowerment Zone or Enterprise Community or in which at least 35 percent of the school's students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch under the federal lunch program (National School Lunch Act);
- public schools that have an education program designed in cooperation with business and receive a private business contribution that is not less than 10 percent of the net present value of the proceeds of the bond; or
- public schools that have an education plan that is approved by their school districts and in which students are subject to the same standards and assessments as other students in the district.

For more information, visit the U.S. Department of Education website at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/qualifiedzone/index.html>, the Internal Revenue Service website at <http://www.irs.gov/recovery> or contact the Pennsylvania Department of Education at the following contact information:

Pennsylvania Department of Education

333 Market Street

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17126-0333

Phone: (717) 783-6788

Website: <http://www.pde.state.pa.us/>

Recovery Website: <http://www.pde.state.pa.us/stimulus>

Impact Aid Discretionary Construction Program **(\$60 million)**

These supplemental funds, appropriated under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, are for school facilities that currently receive Impact Aid Funds. To be eligible for Impact Aid Funds a school district must have a total taxable assessed value of less than \$100 million or have an average assessed value per pupil that is less than the State average. Funding will provide emergency repairs and modernization of school facilities. Acceptable activities include: the preparation of drawings, erecting, building, acquiring, altering, remodeling, repairing, or extending school facilities.

There currently is no deadline for applications under this program. For more information, please visit <http://www.dol.gov/recovery/>.

Section V **Unemployment, Healthcare & Workforce Programs**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is designed to save or create 3.5 million jobs. According to the White House, 143,000 of these jobs will be in Pennsylvania and an estimated 7,800 jobs will be in Northeastern and Central Pennsylvania. This legislation appropriates nearly \$4 billion for training and employment services to help spur job growth. Below is a summary of some of the federal and states programs that will receive funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Federal Funds Administered by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry (www.dli.state.pa.us)
Official Pennsylvania Recovery Website (<http://www.recovery.pa.gov>)

Emergency Unemployment Compensation

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides a federally-funded 33 week extension of emergency unemployment compensation for individuals who have exhausted their regular, state-provided unemployment benefits. Benefits that would have expired on March 31, 2009 are now set to expire on December 31, 2009. State unemployment offices should notify individuals nearing exhaustion of regular benefits of their eligibility for the emergency extension. In addition, the Act suspends federal taxes on unemployment benefits for the remainder of the year.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has also entered into an agreement with the Federal government to provide an additional \$25 in weekly unemployment compensation benefits. No action is necessary on the part of the individual, and payments should begin the first week of March. Payments will be made in the same form of pre-existing regular benefits, whether through debit card or direct deposits.

Furthermore, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, with its current average total unemployment rate above 6.5%, qualifies for a provision in the Recovery package that provides for a temporary modification of the permanent-law Extended Benefits program. The Extended Benefits program helps jobless workers in states with high-unemployment rates access benefits after completion of Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) benefits. This modification in the Recovery package provides workers in Pennsylvania an additional 13 week unemployment extension once EUC benefits are exhausted. Again, state unemployment offices should notify individuals of their eligibility.

I encourage you to contact your local Unemployment Compensation Service Center for more information on all unemployment benefits.

Serving Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, and Monroe Counties

Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry
Scranton Unemployment Compensation Service Center
30 Stauffer Industrial Park
Taylor, PA 18517-9625
Phone: (570) 496-2332
Toll Free: (888) 313-7284

Pennsylvania Workforce Development Systems

Through PA Workforce Development, an unemployed individual can search for a job, get vocational rehabilitation, create a resume, research careers and find training. Employers can find skilled workers, post job openings, screen applicants and research the labor market. Several different state agencies administer the PA Careerlink program, which is designed to be a one-stop resource for business and job seekers alike.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$3.9 billion for training and employment services for activities under the Workforce Investment Act. These funds will be distributed by existing formulas and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will receive an estimated \$90 million as its federal share.

For information about careers in demand, education & training, PA competitive industries and work statistics, you can visit the following website www.paworkforce.state.pa.us.

To find a job, certified training programs and providers and additional local workforce development opportunities, you can visit the following website www.cwds.state.pa.us.

For further information about out what specific workforce development services are available in your area, you will need to contact your local PA Careerlink offices at the following contact information:

PA Careerlink Carbon County

69 Broadway
Jim Thorpe, PA 18229
Phone: (570) 325-2701
Email: Carboncl@ptd.net
www.carboncareerlink.org

PA Careerlink Columbia/Montour Counties

351 Tenny Street
Bloomsburg, PA 17815
Phone: (570) 387-6288
Email: lvanderpool@censop.com

PA Careerlink Lackawanna County

135 Franklin Ave
Scranton, PA 18503
Phone: (570) 963-4671
Email: rmartucci@state.pa.us

PA Careelink at Hazleton

75 N. Laurel Street Hazleton Center
Hazleton, PA 18201
Phone: (570) 459-3854
Email: mtakach@state.pa.us
Phone: (570) 826-2401
Email: wdunn@state.pa.us

PA Careerlink at Wilkes-Barre

32 E. Union Street
Wilkes-Barre Center
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18711

PA Careerlink Monroe County

Route 6111/Merchants Plaza

Tannersville, PA 18372
Phone: (570) 620-2850

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

SCSEP goals are the enhancement of employment opportunities for older Americans and the promotion of older workers as a solution for businesses seeking a trained, qualified, and reliable workforce. You can find additional information by visiting the U.S. Department of Labor Senior Community Service Employment Program website at <http://www.doleta.gov/seniors/>.

Formula funds provided through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for this program are distributed to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, which in turn provides the funds to the County Area Agencies on Aging. You can view the Pennsylvania Department of Aging website <http://www.aging.state.pa.us/>. For information about specific programs available in your area, you should contact your local office at the following contact information:

Carbon County AAA

401 Delaware Avenue
Third Floor
Palmerton, PA18071
Phone: (610) 824-7830
Toll free: (800) 441-1315
Fax: (610) 824-7836
E-mail: ccaging2@ptd.net

Columbia/Montour Aging Office, Inc.

702 Sawmill Road, Suite 201
Bloomsburg, PA 17815-7727
Phone: (570) 784-9272
Toll free: (800) 598-5001
Fax: (570) 784-3678
Website: www.cmaaa15.org
E-mail: info@cmaaa15.org

Lackawanna County Office Building

200 Adams Avenue
Scranton, PA 18503
Phone: (570) 963-6740
Fax: (570) 963-6401
Website: www.lackawannacounty.org
E-mail: osbornet@lackawannacounty.org

Luzerne County Bureau for Aging

111 N. Pennsylvania Boulevard
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701
Phone: (570) 822-1158
Fax: (570) 823-9129
Website: www.aginglw.org
E-mail: gdelivery@aging.luzerne-wyoming.org

Monroe County AAA

724 B Phillips Street
Stroudsburg, PA 18360
Phone: (570) 420-3735
Toll free: (800) 498-0330
Fax: (570) 420-3734
Website: www.co.monroe.pa.us / E-mail: monroeaging@co.monroe.pa.us

Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare

Families and individuals who are going through exceptionally difficult times and need cash assistance, food stamps, help with child care, health care coverage, home heating assistance (LIHEAP) or school meals, may be eligible for assistance from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

For more information, you will need to contact your county assistance office or visit <https://www.humanservices.state.pa.us/compass/CMHOM.aspx> to determine if you can apply for benefits online.

Carbon County Assistance Office

101 Lehigh Street
PO Box 15041
Lehigh, PA 18235
Phone: (610) 577-9020
Fax: (610) 577-9043

Columbia County Assistance Office

27 E. Seventh Street
PO Box 628
Bloomsburg, PA 17815
Toll Free: (877) 211-1322
Phone: (570) 387-4200
Fax: (570) 387-4708

Lackawanna County Assistance Office

200 Scranton State Office Building
100 Lackawanna Ave
Scranton, PA 18503
Toll Free: (877) 431-1887
Phone: (570) 963-4525
Fax: (570) 963-4843

Luzerne County Assistance Office

205 S. Washington Street
PO Box 15041
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701
Phone: (570) 826-2100
Fax: (570) 820-4876

Monroe County Assistance Office

Business Rt. 209 South at Tanite Road
PO Box 232
Stroudsburg, PA 18360
Toll Free: (877) 905-1495
Phone: (570) 424-3030
Fax: (570) 424-3915

Federal Workforce Development Programs

U.S. Department of Labor (<http://www.dol.gov>)
Official Recovery Website (<http://www.dol.gov/recovery>)

COBRA Premium Reductions

Americans who are involuntarily terminated between September 1, 2008 and December 31, 2009 are eligible to receive a 65 percent reduction in their COBRA premiums. To qualify, workers must have a modified adjusted gross income in 2009 and/or 2010 that does not exceed \$125,000 for individuals or \$250,000 for families. Individuals and families are not eligible to receive the COBRA reduction if they are eligible for other group health coverage, such as through a spouse's health care plan, or Medicare.

Premium reductions are available to individuals as of February 17, 2009 - the date of enactment of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Workers should contact their former employer or insurer that administers their health insurance plan to obtain the necessary documents. Employers and insurers are required to reimburse workers who have already paid the full amount for the next pay period, or credit them for a future payment. The premium reduction will last for a period of up to 9 months.

Furthermore, workers who meet the specified qualifications for new COBRA benefits but did not initially opt into COBRA coverage, will have a second chance to do so. Workers should receive notification of this opportunity from their health providers no later than April 18, 2009. If a worker does not receive notification, they should contact their former employer and health insurance provider to notify them of their desire to enroll in COBRA.

I encourage you to visit U.S. Department of Labor COBRA website at <http://www.dol.gov/ebsa/COBRA.html> and the Official Recovery website listed above for more information. If you have further questions about these changes you can contact a Benefits Advisor at the U.S. Department of Labor toll free at (866) 444-3272.

Office of National Response (<http://www.doleta.gov/layoff/>)

The Office of National Response administers three discretionary grant programs for eligible entities serving areas of high unemployment or high poverty and experiencing major economic dislocations.

- **Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) for Workers:** Traditionally, TAA only assisted American workers affected by international trade in the agriculture and manufacturing sections. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act modifies TAA to include trade-affected service sector workers including programmers, call center operators and designers. In addition, the Recovery Act increases the funding for TAA programs from \$16 million to \$50 million through FY 2010.

To apply for TAA benefits, a group of workers (a minimum of three) or a union must first petition the U.S. Department of Labor for certification to be eligible for trade adjustment benefits. To obtain the necessary information to apply for certification groups should contact their local Pennsylvania CareerLink Center. You can find contact information for your local CareerLink Center on Page 36.

To date, the U.S. Department of Labor is still implementing most of the TAA provisions. I encourage you to visit <http://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/> for further information.

- **National Emergency Grants:** Temporarily expands service capacity at the State and local levels through time-limited funding assistance in response to significant dislocation events. Applications for this grant are now available, and will not be accepted past June 10, 2009. For more information please go to (<http://www.doleta.gov/neg/>) or contact Lenita Jacobs-Simmons at (215) 861-5200.
- **Rapid Response Services:** Helps workers and employers deal with the effects of layoffs and plant closures, including those that result from increased competition from imports, natural disasters, and other events. (<http://www.doleta.gov/layoff/rapid.cfm>)

YouthBuild Program **(\$50 million)**

YouthBuild is a highly successful alternative education program that assists youth who are often significantly behind in basic skills with obtaining a high school diploma or GED credential. The primary target populations for YouthBuild are adjudicated youth, youth aging out of foster care, and out-of-school youth. The YouthBuild program is perfectly aligned with the Interagency Youth Vision and demand-driven investments supported by Workforce Investment Act (WIA) formula funds. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$50 million to support the YouthBuild Program.

Grant applications for the 2009 YouthBuild Program can be accessed at the U.S. Department of Labor YouthBuild website at http://www.doleta.gov/youth_services/youthbuildgrantee.cfm. For more information about this program, I encourage you to visit the Official Recovery website listed above.

High Growth Job Training Initiative **(\$750 million)**

This initiative is a strategic effort to prepare workers to take advantage of new and increasing job opportunities in high growth, high demand and economically vital sectors of the American economy. \$750 million has been allocated for this Initiative.

\$500 million of the total allotment must be used for research, labor exchange and job training activities that prepare workers for careers in health care, energy efficiency and renewable energy fields.

To date, no further details have been released about this program. I encourage you to visit the U.S. Department of Labor High Growth Job Training Initiative website at <http://www.doleta.gov/BRG/JobTrainInitiative/> and the Official Recovery website listed above in the coming days for additional information.

Office of Job Corps **(\$250 million)**

Through a nationwide network of campuses, Job Corps offers a comprehensive array of career development services to at-risk young women and men, ages 16 to 24, to prepare them for successful careers. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$250 million for construction, rehabilitation and acquisition of Job Corps Centers.

To date, no further details have been released about this program. I encourage you to visit the U.S. Department of Labor Job Corps website at <http://www.jobcorps.gov/home.aspx> and the Official Recovery website listed above for more information.

United States Department of Commerce (<http://www.commerce.gov>)
Official Recovery Website (<http://www.commerce.gov/recovery>)

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) for Firms

Firms, now including those operating in the services sector, that are similarly impacted by increased import competition are also eligible for TAA benefits administered through the U.S. Department of Commerce. To be eligible for TAA benefits a firm must petition the Economic Development Administration (EDA) for certification. The EDA will review the petition to determine if a significant number of the firm's workers have been negatively impacted by increased imports and if sales and production of the firm have decreased as a result of increased foreign competition.

Upon certification, a firm has two years to file an adjustment assistance application that identifies the technical assistance needed to combat the increased foreign competition it faces. If certification is approved, EDA will provide cost-shared assistance to a firm through a local Trade Adjustment Assistance Center (TAAC). Firms are responsible for 25% of total development proposal cost and at least 25% of the implementation cost.

I encourage you to visit <http://www.eda.gov> and <http://www.taacenters.org> or contact local TAAC and EDA Regional offices at the following contact information for further details.

TAAC MidAtlantic

550 Township Line Road, Suite 450
Blue Bell, PA 19422
Toll Free: (800) 566-7522
Phone: (610) 825-7819
Fax: (610) 825-7708
Email: info@mataac.org

EDA Philadelphia Regional Center

Willie Taylor
Regional Director
Curtis Center, Suite 140 South
601 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106
Phone: (215) 597-4603
Fax: (215) 597-1063

Section VI **Law Enforcement Programs**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act includes \$4 billion U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) grant funding to enhance state, local, and tribal law enforcement. For information about DOJ's plan to administer Recovery Act funds, you should visit its website at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/recoveryact.html>. Information about programs that will receive Recovery Act funds are listed below.

U.S. Department of Justice (<http://www.usdoj.gov>)
Official Recovery Website (<http://www.usdoj.gov/recovery>)

COPS Hiring Recovery Program (\$1 billion)

COPS Hiring Recovery Program (CHRP) is a competitive grant program that provides funding directly to law enforcement agencies having primary law enforcement authority to create and preserve jobs and to increase their community policing capacity and crime-prevention efforts. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$1 billion to support this program.

There is no local match requirement for CHRP, but grant funding will be based on current entry-level salary and benefits packages and therefore any additional costs for higher salaries or benefits for particular individuals hired will be the responsibility of the grantee agency.

CHRP grants will provide 100 percent funding for approved entry-level salaries and benefits for 3 years (36 months) for newly-hired, full-time sworn officer positions (including filling existing unfunded vacancies) or for rehired officers who have been laid off, or are scheduled to be laid off on a future date, as a result of local budget cuts. In addition, there is no cap on the number of positions an agency may request, but awards will be limited to available funding. Please be mindful of the initial 3-year grant period and your agency's ability to fill the officer positions awarded, while following your agency's established hiring policies and procedures.

At the conclusion of federal funding, grantees must retain all sworn officer positions awarded under the CHRP grant. The retained CHRP-funded position(s) should be added to the grantees law enforcement budget with state and/or local funds, over and above the number of locally-funded positions that would have existed in the absence of the grant.

CHRP grant solicitations opened March 16, 2009 and closed April 14, 2009. Applications and further information are available online at <http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/>.

For further information, you can call David Buchanan, Vonda Matthews or Shannon Long in the COPS Grant Office at (202) 514-9079 or call the COPS Office Response Center toll free at (800) 421-6770.

The Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program (\$2 billion)

The Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program allows states and local governments to support a broad range of activities to prevent and control crime and to improve the criminal justice system. JAG replaces the Byrne Formula and Local Law Enforcement Block Grant (LLEBG) programs with a single funding mechanism that simplifies the administration process for grantees. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$2 billion to support this program.

JAG funds are allocated for municipalities to apply for directly and the remaining funds are allocated to the states to administer through competitive grants. To determine if your municipality is eligible to apply directly for JAG funds, you should visit the JAG allocation website at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/recoveryact.html>. The deadline to apply for these direct federal funds is **June 18, 2009**. Eligible municipalities should have received a letter from Congressman Kanjorski in early March detailing the process on how to apply for these funds. If your community did not receive a notification letter, please contact Congressman Kanjorski's Washington, DC Office at (202) 225-6511.

Communities that are not eligible to apply directly for JAG funds, should contact the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) for potential funding opportunities. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will receive an estimated \$73 million as its federal share of JAG funds and PCCD will administer these funds.

For more information about how to apply for these funds, you will need to contact PCCD at the following contact information:

Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency

3101 North Front Street

Harrisburg, PA 17110

Toll Free Phone: (800) 692-7292

Phone: (717) 705-0888

Victims Compensation: (800) 233-2339

PCCD Website: <http://www.pccd.state.pa.us/pccd/site/default.asp>

PCCD Grant Opportunities Website:

<http://www.pccd.state.pa.us/pccd/cwp/view.asp?a=1430&q=573730>

The Edward Byrne Memorial Competitive Grant Program (\$225 million)

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act requires a portion of U.S. Department of Justice's funds be distributed as competitive grants to improve the functioning of the criminal justice system, to assist victims of crime (other than compensation), and youth mentoring programs.

There are four different categories describing eligible activities under this grant program: Comprehensive Community-Based Data-Driven Approaches to Preventing and Reducing Violent Crime; Providing for funding of Neighborhood Probation and Parole Officers; Reducing Mortgage Fraud and Crime Related to Vacant Properties and Hiring of Civilian Staff in Law Enforcement and Public Safety-Related Agencies.

For more information about this program, you can visit its funding announcement guide at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/recovery/RecoveryByrne.pdf>. All applications are due by 8:00 PM on April 27, 2009.

Assistance for Rural Law Enforcement to Combat Drug-Related Crime
(\$125 million)

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act requires a portion of the U.S. Department of Justice's funds be used for providing assistance to law enforcement in rural States and rural areas to prevent and combat, crime, especially drug-related crime.

There are five different categories describing eligible activities under this grant program: Combating Rural Crime; Improving Rural Law Enforcement Investigations; Enhance rural Corrections, Detention, and Jail Operations; Facilitating rural Justice Information Sharing and Training and Technical Assistance.

For more information about this program, you can visit its funding announcement guide at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/recovery/RecoveryRuralLE.pdf>. All applications are due by 8:00 PM on April 22, 2009.

Victim Compensation and Assistance **(\$100 million)**

The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) is a federal agency within the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. OVC provides federal funds to support victim compensation and assistance programs across the Nation. OVC also provides training for diverse professionals who work with victims, develops and disseminates publications, supports projects to enhance victims' rights and services, and educates the public about victim issues.

The Recovery Act provides for \$100 million in funding for victim compensation and assistance. All of the funding will be administered to the states with \$47.5 million in funding directed to state agencies that administer VOCA-funded crime victim compensation programs and the remaining \$47.5 million will be directed to state agencies that administer VOCA-funded crime victim assistance programs.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will receive \$3.8 million as its federal share. The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), Office of Victims' Services will administer these federal funds.

For more information about how to apply for these funds, you will need to contact PCCD. You can find PCCD's contact information on page 43.

National Field-Generated Training, Technical Assistance and Demonstration Project (NFG) (\$5 million)

The Office for Victims of Crime will administer a competitive grant program for private non-profit organizations or public agencies to support the development of national-scope training, technical assistance and demonstration project initiatives. All initiatives must focus on improving the capacity of victim service providers and allied practitioners to advance rights and services to crime victims in a variety of areas, including child abuse, elder abuse, sexual assault, and stalking.

For more information about this program and the Office for Victims of Crime, you should visit its website at <http://www.ovc.gov>.

You must visit <http://www.ojp.gov/ovc/fund/dakit.htm#FY2009tta> to apply for these funds. I also encourage you to visit <http://www.recovery.gov> in the coming days for more information.

Internet Crimes Against Children ICAC Task Force Program (\$50 million)

The U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention agency operates the ICAC Task Force Program. This program helps state and local law enforcement agencies develop an effective response to cyber enticement and child pornography cases. This help encompasses forensic and investigative components, training and technical assistance, victim services, and community education. The program was developed in response to the increasing number of children and teenagers using the Internet, the proliferation of child pornography, and heightened online activity by predators seeking unsupervised contact with potential underage victims.

The ICAC program is a national network of 59 coordinated task forces representing over 2,000 federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies. These agencies are engaged in proactive investigations, forensic investigations, and criminal prosecutions. By helping state and local agencies to develop effective, sustainable responses to online child victimization and child pornography, OJJDP has increased their capacity to address Internet crimes against children.

To be eligible for funds from the Recovery Act, you must currently be eligible for ICAC funding. Applications for this program must be received through the Grants Management System at <https://grants.ojp.usdoj.gov/> and must be received by midnight on May 14, 2009.

Office on Violence Against Women (\$225 million)

The mission of the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) is to provide federal leadership to reduce violence against women, and to administer justice for and strengthen services to all victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. This is accomplished by developing and supporting the capacity of state, local, tribal, and non-profit entities involved in responding to violence against women. You can visit the Office on Violence Against Women website at <http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov> to learn more about this agency.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$225 million to support OVW programs. Below you will find a list of programs that will receive Recovery funds.

STOP (Services – Training – Officers – Prosecutors) Formula Grant (\$175 million)

This program promotes a coordinated, multidisciplinary approach to improving the criminal justice system's response to violent crimes against women. The STOP Program encourages the development and strengthening of effective law enforcement and prosecution strategies to address violent crimes against women and the development and strengthening of victim services in cases involving violent crimes against women. You can view the STOP website at http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/stop_grant_desc.htm for more information.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$175 million to support this program. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) will administer most STOP funds.

For information on how to apply for these funds, you will need to contact PCCD at the following contact information:

Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency

Victims' Services Program

Toll Free Phone: (800) 692-7292 Ext. 4

Phone: (717) 265-8735

PCCD Website: <http://www.pccd.state.pa.us/pccd/site/default.asp>

STOP Website: <http://www.pccd.state.pa.us/pccd/cwp/view.asp?A=1430&Q=576677#>

In addition, a portion of the STOP funds will be distributed to State Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Coalitions. The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence is likely to receive some of these funds. For more information, you can visit its website at <http://www.pcadv.org/>.

Transition Housing Grant Program (\$50 million)

Transitional Housing Assistance Program Grant for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Stalking, or Sexual Assault Program (Transitional Housing Assistance Program) focuses on a holistic, victim-centered approach to provide transitional housing services that move individuals into permanent housing. Grants made under this program support programs that provide assistance to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking who are in need of transitional housing, short-term housing assistance, and related support services. It is critical that successful transitional housing programs provide a wide range of flexible and optional services that reflect the differences and individual needs of victims and that allows victims to choose the course of action that is best for them. Transitional housing programs may offer individualized services such as counseling, support groups, safety planning, and advocacy services as well as practical services such as licensed child care, employment services, transportation vouchers, telephones, and referrals to other agencies.

For more information about this program you can visit the Transition Housing Grant website at http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/thousing_grant_desc.htm. I encourage you to visit the U.S. Department of Justice's Official Recovery website at <http://www.doj.gov/recovery> and contact the Office of Violence Against Women for more information.

Office of Violence Against Women (OVW)

800 K Street NW, Suite 920

Washington, DC 20530

Phone: (202) 307-6026

Fax: (202) 307-3911

Website: www.usdoj.gov/ovw

Section VII **Firefighter Station Grants**

Fire companies play a critical role in providing safety and security to our nation's communities. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$210 million in competitive grants for non-federal fire stations.

Funds can be used to modify, upgrade or construct non-federal fire stations. State and local fire companies are eligible to apply. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will administer these infrastructure grants to fire departments.

In June and July this year, FEMA will begin giving guidance on how to apply for this grant program. Funds for this program are expected to be distributed in September and December of this year.

Updated information on the implementation and availability of specific grant opportunities will be posted online at the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program website at <http://www.firegrantsupport.com> as soon as it is available.

I encourage you to check the following websites or call the help desk in the coming days for more information.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: <http://www.recovery.gov>

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): <http://www.fema.gov/recovery>

U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS): <http://www.dhs.gov>

Firefighters Grant Program Help Desk

Phone: (866) 274-0960

Email: firegrants@dhs.gov

FEMA/DHS/AFG Region II

Mr. Dustin Brosius

615 Chestnut Street

6th Floor

Philadelphia, PA 19106

Phone: (215) 931-5718

Fax: (215) 931-5539

Email: dustin.brosius@dhs.gov

Melissa Evans

Regional Fire Program Specialist

Contractor – Cabezon Group

Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program

815 Copeland Way, PMB 34

Pittsburgh, PA 15232

Phone: (412) 687-1331 or

(412) 216-4529

Fax: (412) 687-1331

Email: Melissa.evans@associates.dhs.gov

Section VIII **Economic and Community Development**

In order to rebuild our economy, we will need to rebuild and upgrade our community infrastructure. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides funds for several different federal and state agencies and program to rebuild and upgrade the nation's communities. Below is a summary of some of the federal and states programs that will receive funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Development **(<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/>)**

Community Facilities Program **(\$130 million)**

USDA's Rural Development administers the Community Facilities Program to develop essential community facilities for public use in rural areas. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$130 million to support this program.

Community facilities include schools, libraries, childcare, hospitals, medical clinics, assisted living facilities, fire and rescue stations, police stations, community centers, public buildings and transportation.

Community Programs utilizes three flexible financial tools to achieve this goal: the Community Facilities Guaranteed Loan Program, the Community Facilities Direct Loan Program, and the Community Facilities Grant Program. Maximum Grant can be up to 75% of total project cost.

Rural area is defined as areas with populations of 20,000 or less. Public bodies and non-profit organizations can apply.

For more information about this program, you can visit the USDA Rural Development website at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/>.

In order to apply for these funds you will need to contact your local USDA Rural Development office. You can find their contact information on page 17 of this guidebook.

Business and Industry (B&I) Guaranteed Loan Program **(\$3 billion)**

Rural Development's B& I Guaranteed Loan Program has received approximately \$3 billion to provide additional funds to lenders to improve, develop, or finance business, industry, and employment and improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities. This will be achieved by bolstering the existing private credit structure through the guarantee of quality loans which will provide lasting community benefits. Funds will be available under this authority through September 30, 2010.

Most types of manufacturing, wholesale, retail, service enterprises that are in an area classified as rural, qualify. Rural area is classified as an area that is not immediately influenced by a city with a population of 50,000 or more. Company must be majority US owned and be less than 20% owned by the government or military.

In order to apply for these funds you will need to contact your local USDA Rural Development office. You can find their contact information on page 17 of this guidebook.

Rural Development's Business Enterprise Grant Program (\$200 million)

Rural Development's Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) program will receive approximately \$20 million dollars under the Act to provide funding for a broad variety of programs to support business development in rural areas. RBEG funding may be used for many purposes making it uniquely suited to meet the varying needs of individual areas while helping to speed economic recovery. The RBEG program may fund projects as varied as business revolving loan funds, business district infrastructure projects, capital improvement projects, business incubators, and downtown revitalization projects.

In order to apply for these funds you will need to contact your local USDA Rural Development office. You can find their contact information on page 17 of this guidebook.

Rural Utilities Service – Broadband (\$2.5 billion)

USDA's Rural Development, Rural Utilities Service aims to create and modernize rural telecommunications services across the United States. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$2.5 billion for Broadband loans, loan guarantees, and grants.

At least 75% of the area that will be served by a project receiving these funds must be in a rural area previously lacking sufficient access to high-speed broadband services. Priority will be given to projects that can commence promptly.

Recently the RUS released information about a grant program where applications are being accepted. To learn how to apply for these funds, you should visit the Rural Utilities Service website at <http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/>.

Section 502 Direct Loan Program (\$1 billion)

Recovery Act 502 Guaranteed loan funds will encourage private sector lenders to make affordable home loans in rural America. These government guaranteed loans will provide additional credit for affordable home loans, and refinancing of home loans. Section 502 loans are primarily used to help low-income individuals or households purchase homes in rural areas. Funds can be used to build, repair, renovate or relocate a home, or to purchase and prepare sites, including providing water and sewage facilities.

Very low income is defined as below 50 percent of the area median income (AMI) and low income is between 50 and 80 percent of AMI.

For more information on this program, you should visit the Rural Housing Service website at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/>.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (<http://www.epa.gov/>)
Official Recovery Website (<http://www.epa.gov/recovery>)

Brownfields Program (**\$100 million**)

Brownfields are real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Brownfields Program provides direct funding for brownfields assessment, cleanup, revolving loans, and environmental job training. EPA's Regional Offices administers this grant program.

Brownfields Grants are divided into Assessment Grants, Revolving Loan Fund Grants, Cleanup Grants, Job Training Grants and Training, Research, and Technical Assistance Grants. For information about each grant program, you can visit <http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/pilot.htm>.

For information about how to apply for these funds, you will need to contact EPA's Region 3 Office at the following contact information:

EPA Region 3 Brownfield Program Coordinator:

Mr. Tom Stolle

U.S. EPA Region 3

1650 Arch Street (3PM52)

Philadelphia, PA 1910

Phone: (215) 814-3129

Stole.tom@epa.gov

EPA's Region 3 Homepage: <http://www.epa.gov/region03/index.htm>

Brownfields Grant Homepage: <http://www.epa.gov/reg3hwmd/bf-lr/bf-grants.html>

Job Training Brownfield Grants

The EPA has directed recovery funds specifically for job training grants for the purposes of training workers in handling hazardous materials, the management of hazardous waste facilities, and techniques for the cleanup of pollutants and other substances. Eligible applicants are governmental entities and nonprofit organizations in communities that have previously received Brownfields assistance.

The EPA is currently accepting applications for job training grants. Applications can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/eparecovery/index.htm> along with detailed information on how job training funding can specifically be used. The deadline for applications is **April 20, 2009**.

Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, and Cleanup Grants

Along with job training grants, the EPA has directed recovery funding to their existing assessment, revolving loan fund, and cleanup grants programs.

To date, no further details have been released about the implementation of this new funding. In the coming days I encourage you to visit the Official Recovery website listed above for updates. Further questions can be directed to the EPA Brownfields Program at Brownfields-Web-Comments@epamail.epa.gov.

U.S. Department of Commerce (<http://www.commerce.gov>)
Official Recovery Website (<http://www.commerce.gov/recovery>)

Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (\$4.7 billion)

The Broadband Technology Opportunities Program is meant to expand broadband services to rural and underserved areas and improve access to broadband by public safety agencies. Of these funds, \$250 million will be available for innovative programs that encourage sustainable adoption of broadband services; at least \$200 million will be available to upgrade technology and capacity at public computing centers, including community colleges and public libraries; \$10 million will be a transfer to the Office of Inspector General for the purposes of BTOP audits and oversight. Up to \$350 million of the BTOP funding is designated for the development and maintenance of statewide broadband inventory maps.

To date, no further details have been released about the implementation of this new funding. In the coming days I encourage you to visit the Official Recovery website listed above for updates. Further questions can be directed to the National Telecommunications Information Administration Broadband website at <http://www.ntia.doc.gov/recovery/index.html>.

Economic Development Administration (EDA) (\$150 million)

In fulfilling its mission, EDA is guided by the basic principle that distressed communities must be empowered to develop and implement their own economic development and revitalization strategies. Based on these locally- and regionally-developed priorities, EDA works in partnership with state and local governments, regional economic development districts, public and private nonprofit organizations, and Indian tribes. You can view the EDA website at <http://www.eda.gov>.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$150 million for EDA to administer its numerous programs. A summary of these programs is provided below.

EDA is required to give priority consideration to areas of the Nation that have experienced sudden and severe economic dislocation and job loss due to corporate restructuring.

Summary of EDA's Economic Development Programs
(<http://www.eda.gov/AboutEDA/Programs.xml>)

Public Works and Economic Development Program

Investments help support the construction or rehabilitation of essential public infrastructure and facilities necessary to generate or retain private sector jobs and investments, attract private sector capital, and promote regional competitiveness, including investments that expand and upgrade infrastructure to attract new industry, support technology-led development, redevelop brownfield sites and provide eco-industrial development.

Economic Adjustment Assistance Program

The Economic Adjustment Assistance Program provides a wide range of technical, planning and infrastructure assistance in regions experiencing adverse economic changes that may occur suddenly or over time. This program is designed to respond flexibly to pressing economic recovery issues and is well suited to help address challenges faced by U.S. regions and communities

Research and National Technical Assistance

The Research and National Technical Assistance Program supports research of leading, world class economic development practices, and funds information dissemination efforts.

Local Technical Assistance

The Local Technical Assistance Program helps fill the knowledge and information gaps that may prevent leaders in the public and nonprofit sectors in economically distressed regions from making optimal decisions on local economic development issues.

Planning Program

The Planning Program helps support planning organizations, including District Organizations and Indian Tribes, in the development, implementation, revision or replacement of comprehensive economic development strategies (CEDs), and for related short-term planning investments and State plans designed to create and retain higher-skill, higher-wage jobs, particularly for the unemployed and underemployed in the nation's most economically distressed regions.

University Center Economic Development Program

The University Center Economic Development Program is a partnership between the Federal government and academia that helps to make the varied and vast resources of universities available to economic development communities.

Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms Program

EDA administers the Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms Program through a national network of eleven Trade Adjustment Assistance Centers to help manufacturing and production firms, which have lost domestic sales and employment due to increased imports of similar or competitive goods, become more competitive in the global economy

For more information about how to apply for these funds, you will need to contact the local EDA Office at the following contact information:

Philadelphia Regional Office

The Curtis Center
601 Walnut Street, Suite 140 South
Philadelphia, PA 19106-3821
Phone: (215) 597-4603
Fax: (215) 597-1063
Website: www.eda.gov

TV Converter Box Coupon Program **(\$650 million)**

Congress created the TV Converter Box Coupon Program for households wishing to keep using their analog TV sets after broadcasters stop analog broadcasting. The Coupon Program allows U.S. households to obtain up to two coupons, each worth \$40, which can be applied toward the cost of eligible converter boxes. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act allocates \$650 million dollars to help families with this transition.

If you would like information or would like to apply for a coupon please go to the website for this program at <https://www.dtv2009.gov/AboutProgram.aspx>.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

(<http://www.hud.gov>)

Official Recovery Website

(<http://www.hud.gov/recovery>)

Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) **(\$1 billion)**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development administers formula grants to entitled states, cities and counties to develop viable communities. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act allocates \$1 billion for this program.

Communities receiving CDBG funds are permitted to carry out a wide range of community development activities directed toward revitalizing neighborhoods, economic development, and providing improved community facilities and services.

Priority will be given to projects that can award contracts based on bids within 120 days. For more information about eligible CDBG activities, you can visit the following website: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/library/stateguide/>.

To apply for these funds, you will need to contact the community agency who receives these federally allocated funds. You will find a list of communities who receive CDBG funds on page 14 of this guidebook.

For more information about this program, you can visit the U.S. Housing and Urban Development website at <http://www.hud.gov> or you can visit the Community Development Block Grant Program website at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/programs/>.

Neighborhood Stabilization Program Grants **(\$2 billion)**

Neighborhood Stabilization Program will provide emergency assistance to state and local governments to acquire and redevelop foreclosed properties that might otherwise become sources of abandonment and blight within their communities. The Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) provides grants to every state and certain local communities to purchase foreclosed or abandoned homes and to rehabilitate, resell, or redevelop these homes in order to stabilize neighborhoods and stem the decline of house values of neighboring homes. Communities with a HUD risk score of six and above or significant subprime lending are eligible for these competitive funds.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$2 billion for this grant program. These funds are administered in a similar fashion as the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG). The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) administers most of these funds.

For information on how to apply for these funds, you will need to contact DCED at the following contact information:

Pennsylvania's Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street, 4th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17120
Phone: (717) 783-8452
Fax: (717) 772-3101
Website: <http://www.newpa.com>

For more information about this program, you can visit the U.S. Housing and Urban Developments website at <http://www.hud.gov> or you can visit the Neighborhood Stabilization Program website at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/programs/neighborhoodspg/>.

HOME Investment Partnerships Program **(\$2.25 billion)**

HOME provides formula grants to States and localities that communities use, often in partnership with local nonprofit groups-to fund a wide range of activities that build, buy, and/or rehabilitate affordable housing for rent or homeownership or provide direct rental assistance to low-income people. HOME is the largest Federal block grant to State and local governments designed exclusively to create affordable housing for low-income households.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$2.25 billion to support the HOME Investment Partnership Program. These funds are administered in fashion similar to the Community Development Block Grants. To apply for these funds, you will need to contact the community agency that receives these federally-allocated funds. You will find a list of those communities on page 14 of this guidebook.

For more information about the program, you visit the U.S. Housing and Urban Development website at <http://www.hud.gov> or you can visit the official HOME Investment Partnerships Program website at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/affordablehousing/programs/home/>.

Public Housing Capital Fund (Competitive) **(\$1 billion)**

Under the Recovery Act, HUD provides these grant funds to Public Housing Authorities to carry out priority capital and management activities in public housing. In order to receive funding under this program, funds must be used in one of the four categories: improvements addressing the needs of the elderly or disabled, public housing

transformation, gap financing for stalled projects or the creation of energy efficient communities.

This is a competitive program and applications will be considered on a first come, first serve basis. Applications for this program will be accepted until August 18, 2009.

For more information regarding this program, please visit the Housing and Urban Development Website at www.hud.gov/recovery.

Financial Tools for Economic & Community Development

Build America (Tax Credit) Bond

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act creates a new “Build America Bond” tax credit to help State and local governments finance certain infrastructure projects. This program is unique because it will provide a tax credit bond in lieu of a tax-exempt bond.

Tax credit bonds differ from tax-exempt bonds in two ways: (1) interest paid on tax credit bonds is taxable; and (2) a portion of the interest paid on tax credit bonds takes the form of a Federal tax credit. The Federal tax credit offsets a portion of the cash interest payment that the State or local government would otherwise need to make on the borrowing.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides in 2009 and 2010 for State and local governments the option of issuing a tax credit bond instead of a tax-exempt governmental obligation bond. Because the market for tax credits is currently small given the current economic conditions, this provision will allow State or local governments to elect to receive a direct payment from the Federal government equal to the subsidy that would have otherwise been delivered through the Federal tax credit for bonds.

For more detailed information about this bond, you can view the tax provisions in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provided by the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee at <http://waysandmeans.house.gov/media/pdf/110/sbill.pdf>.

To date, no further details have been released about this program. I encourage you to visit the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Official Recovery website at <http://www.irs.gov/recovery>, and the U.S. Department of the Treasury website at <http://www.ustreas.gov> in the coming days for more information.

Recovery Zone Bonds

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act creates a new category for tax credit bonds for investment in economic recovery zone. The Recovery Act authorizes \$10 billion in recovery zone economic development bonds and \$15 billion in recovery zone facility bonds.

These bonds could be issued during 2009 and 2010. Each state will receive a share of the national allocation based on that state’s job losses in 2008 as percentage of national job losses in 2008. These allocations would be sub-allocated to local municipalities.

Municipalities receiving an allocation of these bonds would be permitted to use these bonds to invest in infrastructure, job training, education and economic development in areas within the boundaries of the State, city or county that has significant poverty, unemployment or home foreclosures.

For more detailed information about this bond, you can view the tax provisions in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provided by the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee at <http://waysandmeans.house.gov/media/pdf/110/sbill.pdf>.

To date, no further details have been released about this program. I encourage you to visit the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Official Recovery website at <http://www.irs.gov/recovery>, and the U.S. Department of the Treasury website at <http://www.ustreas.gov> in the coming days for more information.

New Markets Tax Credits

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides an additional \$5 billion for the New Markets Tax Credits program. The New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) Program permits taxpayers to receive a credit against federal income taxes for making qualified equity investments in designated Community Development Entities (CDEs).

Substantially all of the qualified equity investment must in turn be used by the CDE to provide investments in low-income communities. The credit provided to the investor totals 39 percent of the cost of the investment and is claimed over a seven-year credit allowance period. In each of the first three years, the investor receives a credit equal to five percent of the total amount paid for the stock or capital interest at the time of purchase. For the final four years, the value of the credit is six percent annually. Investors may not redeem their investments in CDEs prior to the conclusion of the seven-year period.

You can learn more about the program at the U.S. Department of the Treasury's New Markets Tax Credit Program website at http://www.cdfifund.gov/what_we_do/programs_id.asp?programID=5.

To date, no further details have been released about this program. I encourage you to visit the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Official Recovery website at <http://www.irs.gov/recovery>, and the U.S. Department of the Treasury website at <http://www.ustreas.gov> in the coming days for more information.

Section IX **Flood Prevention Programs**

A portion of the American Recovery and Reinvestment is dedicated to rebuilding the nation's dam and levee systems. A significant portion of the funds are appropriated to support projects operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers but the U.S. Department of Agriculture will also receive Recovery Act funds. Below is a summary of some of the programs that will receive funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (<http://www.usda.gov>)
Official Recovery Website (<http://www.usda.gov/recovery>)

Natural Resources Conservation Service (\$290 million)

USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) provides leadership to help America's private landowners and managers conserve their soil, water, and other natural resources. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$290 to support various NRCS programs.

You can visit the Natural Resources Conservation Service website at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov> to learn more about the agency.

NRCS only plans to devote stimulus funds to NRCS-approved projects that can begin immediately. Guidelines for NRCS approval can be obtained through local USDA County offices. Below you will find a description of NRCS programs that will receive Recovery funds, NRCS's website and a listing of the County offices who will administer the Recovery funds.

Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (\$190 million)

Watershed Operations is a voluntary program which provides assistance to sponsoring local organizations of authorized watershed projects, planned and approved under the authority of the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act of 1954 (P.L. 83-566), and 11 designated watershed authorized by the Flood Control Act of 1944 (P.L. 78-534). NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to States, local governments and Tribes (project sponsors) to implement authorized watershed project plans for the purpose of watershed protection; flood mitigation; water quality improvements; soil erosion reduction; rural, municipal and industrial water supply; irrigation water management; sediment control; fish and wildlife enhancement; and wetlands and wetland function creation and restoration.

For more information, you can view the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention website at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/watershed/index.html>.

Emergency Watershed Protection – Floodplain Easement **(\$145 million)**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provide NRCS funding to purchase and restore floodplain easements from local landowners to oversee their protection by maintaining their ecological functions as well as preserving the natural resources, fish, and wildlife that may inhabit the area.

For more information, you can view the Emergency Watershed Protection – Floodplain Easement website at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/Floodplain/index.html>.

Watershed Rehabilitation Program **(\$50 million)**

The Natural Resources Conservation Service Rehabilitation Program aims to maintain and revitalize deteriorating dams across the United States. Since 1948, the NRCS has constructed over 11,000 dams across the country. Many of these dams, some constructed over 50 years ago, are currently in need of construction and maintenance. The Watershed Rehabilitation program is designed to revitalize and upgrade these valuable dams.

NRCS only provides Rehabilitation Funds to dams that were installed through previous NRCS watershed programs.

For more information, you can view the Watershed Rehabilitation Program website at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/WSRehab/index.html>.

NRCS Local Offices Contact Information

Pennsylvania State NRCS Office

Anne Anderson
State Administrative Officer
Anne.anderson@pa.usda.gov
1 Credit Union Place
Harrisburg, PA 17110
Phone: (717) 237-2117

Carbon County & Monroe Counties

NRCS Lehighon Program Delivery
Point
Paul Yankovich
District Conservationist
Paul.Yankovich@pa.usda.gov
5664 Interchange Road
Lehighon, PA 18235-5114
Phone: (610) 377-6143
Fax (610) 377-5549

Columbia County

Paul Yankovich
District Conservationist
Paul.Yankovich@pa.usda.gov
Bloomsburg USDA Service Center
702 Sawmill Road
Bloomsburg, PA 17815
Phone: (570) 784-1062 Ext. 2
Fax: (570) 387-7715

Lackawanna County

Jill Weaver
District Conservationist
Mayfield USDA Service Center
1300 Old Plank Road
Mayfield, PA 18433
Phone: (570) 282-8732 Ext. 611
Fax: (570) 281-5379

Luzerne County

Richard Maculaitis

District Conservationist

Richard.maculaitis@pa.usda.gov

Plymouth USDA Service Center

911 W. Main Street

Plymouth, PA 18651

Phone: (570) 779-0645 Ext. 3

Fax: (570) 779-5714

Section X **Small Business**

Small Business is the engine that drives our economy. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$730 million to the Small Business Administration (SBA) and makes changes to the agency's lending and investment programs so that they can reach more small businesses that need help. Below is a summary of some of the changes.

Small Business Administration (<http://www.sba.gov>)
Official Recovery Website (<http://www.sba.gov/recovery>)

Temporary Fee Reductions or Eliminations (\$375 million)

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$375 million for temporary fee reductions or eliminations on Small Business Administration (SBA) loans. Most fees are reduced or eliminated through September 2010 on certain SBA loans.

90 Percent Guarantee

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act allows the SBA to raise its loan guarantee from the current levels to as much as 90 percent for some loans. At present, SBA can guarantee loans up to 85 percent on loans up to \$15,000 and up to 75% on loans greater than \$150,000. The 50 percent guarantee on SBA Express loans would remain unchanged.

Business Stabilization Loans (\$225 million)

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act creates a new SBA loan program to provide deferred-payment loans of up to \$35,000 to viable small businesses that need the money to make payments on an existing, qualifying loan for up to six months. These loans will be 100 percent guaranteed by SBA. Repayment would not have to begin until 12 months after the loan is fully disbursed.

Microloans (\$30 million)

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$30 million for expanding SBA's Microloan program, enough to finance up to \$50 million in new lending and \$24 million in technical assistance grants to microlenders. This expands SBA's Microloan program, which provides small loans (up to \$35,000) paired with technical assistance to start-up, newly established or growing small businesses. Historically, these loans reach low-income individuals, women and minorities in both rural and urban areas. The program is expanded through September 30, 2010.

Refinancing

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act authorizes refinancing for certain SBA loans so borrowers can expand their businesses on favorable terms, and help create jobs in their communities. This loan authority is through the 504 Certified Development Company program.

Secondary Market Expansion

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act authorizes SBA to establish a secondary market for pools of “first lien” loans under the 504 program. These “first lien” loans from commercial lenders currently have no SBA guarantee. The Act authorizes SBA to deploy federal guarantees for pools of these first lien loans, so that they can be sold to investors in a secondary market. Providing liquidity for these first mortgages will help encourage lenders to continue participating in SBA’s 504 loan program, which provides a key source of capital for community development and other projects.

The Act also empowers SBA to set up a Secondary Market Lending Authority that would make direct loans to broker-dealers that participate in the secondary market for SBA-guaranteed 7(a) loans.

Surety Bonds **(\$15 million)**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act raises the maximum contract amount that can be covered by an SBA guaranteed surety bond from \$2 million to \$5 million, and, under certain circumstances, for contracts amounting to \$10 million, and provides additional funds to cover the costs of expanding this program.

Small businesses need surety bonds in order to bid on and obtain many federal and other contracts. SBA guarantees surety bonds to small businesses that private surety companies would not otherwise be able to extend. If you would like more information on this program, I encourage you to visit the SBA’s Surety Bond Guarantee Program at <http://www.sba.gov/osg/> or call 1-800-U ASK SBA.

Investment Program

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act helps SBA-licensed Small Business Investment Companies (SBICs) and families of SBIC funds better leverage the capital they use to invest in small businesses. The Recovery Act sets maximum levels of funding the agency can provide to these companies at up to three times the private capital raised by those companies, or \$150 million, whichever is less. It also raises the percentage any one SBIC can invest in a single small business to 10 percent of total capital, and raises from 20 percent to 25 percent the percentage of any licensee’s dollar investments that must be made in “smaller” businesses.

Small Business Administration (SBA) Contact Information

To date, the Small Business Administration (SBA) has not provided details about how fast the changes made in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will be implemented. For more information in the coming days, I encourage you to visit the SBA website at <http://www.sba.gov> or contact the local office at the following contact information:

Philadelphia District Office

Robert N. C. Nix Federal Building
900 Market Street, 5th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Phone: (215) 580-2SBA or (215) 580-2722

Website: <http://www.sba.gov/localresources/district/pa/phil/index.html>

I also encourage you to consult with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in your community. The SBDC program is a cooperative effort of the private sector, the educational community, and federal, state, and local governments. You can visit the SBDCs at both universities free of charge through the following contact information:

Wilkes University SBDC
Ruth Hughes, Director
Innovation Center, Suite 200
7 South Main Street
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701

(570) 408-4340

Website: <http://sbdc.wilkes.edu/>

University of Scranton SBDC
Elaine Tweedy, Director
800 Linden St.
Estate Building, 2nd Floor
Scranton, PA 18510

(570) 941-7588 or (570) 829-7232

Website: www.pasbdc.org/scranton

Section XI **Consumer Tax Credits**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act cuts taxes for 95% of working families in the nation. Below is a summary of some of the tax cuts and credits created.

One-Time Economic Recovery Payment

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides for a one-time payment of \$250 to individuals who receive Social Security benefits, Railroad Retirement benefits, veteran's compensation or pension benefits and Supplemental Security Income (SSI), excluding individuals who receive SSI while in a Medicaid institution.

Furthermore, individuals must have been participating in one of these programs three months prior to 02/17/2009 to qualify.

The one-time payments will not come from Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as they have in previous legislation. The Social Security Administration expects everyone who is entitled to a payment to receive it by late May 2009. One-time payments will be a separate payment delivered in the same form benefits are currently delivered, whether through check or direct deposit. No action is required by the individual at this time.

After June 4, 2009 if you have not received your one-time recovery payment you can contact your local Social Security office or call the toll-free number at (800) 722-1213.

Making Work Pay Tax Credit

A refundable tax credit will be issued of up to \$400 for working individuals and \$800 for working families in 2009 and 2010.

For individuals who receive a paycheck and are subject to withholding, the credit will typically be handled by their employers through automated withholding changes in early spring. These changes may result in an increase in take-home pay. The amount of the credit must be reported on the employee's 2009 income tax return filed in 2010. Taxpayers who do not have taxes withheld by an employer during the year can also claim the credit on their 2009 tax return.

It is not necessary to submit a Form W-4 to get the automatic withholding change. However, an employee with multiple jobs or married couples whose combined incomes place them in a higher tax bracket may elect to submit a revised [W-4](#) to ensure enough withholding is held to cover the tax for his or her combined income. Individuals with a gross income above \$75,000 or married couples filing jointly with a combine income of \$150,000 are not eligible for this tax credit.

Detailed information on this tax credit can be found through the Internal Revenue Service Publication 15-T. A copy of Publication 15-T can be found directly at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p15t.pdf>.

I encourage you to visit the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Official Recovery website at <http://www.irs.gov/recovery> in the coming days for more information. If you do not have access to the internet, you can call the IRS toll free at (800) 829-1040.

Refundable First-Time Home Buyer Credit

Last year, Congress provided taxpayers with a refundable tax credit that was equivalent to an interest-free loan equal to 10% of the purchase of a home (up to \$7,500) by first-time home buyers. Taxpayers receiving this tax credit are currently required to repay any amount received back to the government of 15 years in equal installments, or, if earlier, when the home is sold.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act eliminates the repayment obligation for taxpayers that purchase homes after January 1, 2009 and before December 1, 2009. In addition, the credit is increased to \$8,000 and removes the prohibition on financing by mortgages revenue bonds.

This provision only applies to the individual's primary residence and if the individual changes residency within 36 months of the purchase, they will be required to payback the credit.

The IRS has released information describing how first-time homebuyer tax credits can be claimed on a buyer's 2008 federal tax return. Individuals applying for this tax credit should submit an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 5405. If a home purchase closes after April 15, 2009 a buyer can still claim the credit on their 2008 tax return by requesting an extension or filing an amended return.

The appropriate tax forms and further information on filing options for this credit are available on the Official IRS Recovery website at <http://www.irs.gov/recovery>. If you do not have access to the internet, you can call the IRS toll free at (800) 829-1040.

Sales Tax Deduction for Vehicle Purchases

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides taxpayers with a deduction for State and local sales and excise taxes paid on the purchase of a qualified motor vehicle until January 1, 2010. A qualified motor vehicle means a passenger automobile, light truck, or motorcycle which has a gross vehicle weight of not more than 8,500 pounds, or a motor home.

This tax deduction is available for up to the first \$49,500 of the purchase price of an eligible motor vehicle. The deduction is not available for joint tax filers with a modified adjusted gross income between \$250,000 and \$260,000, and taxpayers with a modified adjusted gross income between \$125,000 and \$135,000.

Further information on qualified vehicle purchases tax credits can be found on the Official IRS Recovery website at <http://www.irs.gov/recovery>. If you do not have access to the internet, you can call the IRS toll free at (800) 829-1040.

Plug-In Electric Vehicle Tax Credit

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act creates a tax credit for low-speed or two- or three-wheel electric vehicles, such as motor scooters, purchased after Feb. 17, 2009, and before Jan. 1, 2012. The amount of the credit is 10 percent of the cost of the vehicle, up to a maximum credit of \$2,500. To qualify, a vehicle must be either a low-speed vehicle that is propelled to a significant extent by a rechargeable battery with a capacity of at least 4 kilowatt hours or be a two- or three-wheeled vehicle that is propelled to a significant extent by a rechargeable battery with a capacity of at least 2.5 kilowatt hours.

Further information on qualified plug-in electric vehicle tax credits can be found on the Official IRS Recovery website at <http://www.irs.gov/recovery>. If you do not have access to the internet, you can call the IRS toll free at (800) 829-1040.

Health Care Tax Credit

In an effort healthcare affordable in these difficult times, a tax credit has been increased for individuals receiving Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance. Individuals that are receiving this assistance will see an increase in the Health Care Tax Credit from 65% to 80% of the amount a worker paid for coverage under qualifying health insurance.

For more information, visit the IRS website at <http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=109960,00.html>.

Section XII

Health Information Technology Programs

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides more than \$2 billion for Health Information Technology (HIT). The purpose of this investment is to develop a secure and efficient technological infrastructure to support the nationwide exchange of electronic health information, including electronic health records, between federal and local agencies. A more efficient exchange of information between healthcare providers will help reduce the cost of healthcare. Please know, the funds provided for this initiative are only to help promote a more efficient exchange of information and that the federal government will **NOT** be making healthcare decisions for individuals.

Federal Health Information Technology Programs

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (<http://www.hhs.gov>)
Official Recovery Website (<http://www.hhs.gov/recovery>)

Health Information Technology **\$2 billion**

In order to jumpstart improvements in Health Information Technology, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act moves the Office of the National Coordinator of Health and Information Technology (ONCHIT) under the authority of the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). ONCHIT's strategic goal is to invest in health information technology to promote the use and exchange of electronic health information across the country.

The National Coordinator is authorized to allocate recovery funds to relevant agencies including the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to provide grants for the purposes of developing and improving HIT architecture, training and dissemination grants to test and implement electronic systems, telemedicine support, technologies to secure and protect health information, and promoting health information technology to public departments.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services is required to provide to Congress the fiscal year 2009 plan no later than 90 days after the enactment of H.R. 1. The Secretary is also required to submit a follow-up report on the use of Health Information Technology funds to Congress no later than November 1, 2009 and every six months thereafter.

The Secretary is also required to use recovery funds to establish and support HIT Regional Extension Centers to provide assistance to local healthcare providers. The Secretary is required to publish a notice of the establishment and funding of these facilities no later than 90 days after the enactment of H.R.1. To date, no further information has been provided on the local regional centers.

In the coming days, I encourage you to visit the websites of ONCHIT, AHRQ, CMS, and the CDC for more information on specific grant opportunities. You will find the respective agencies contact information below. For further information and updates on Health Information technology grants, you should also visit <http://www.recovery.gov> and <http://www.grants.gov>.

Office of the National Coordinator for Health and Information Technology

Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave, SW
Suite 729-D
Washington, DC 20201
(202) 690-7151
Fax (202) 690-6079
Email: onc.request@hhs.gov
Website: <http://www.hhs.gov/healthit/>

Agency for Healthcare Quality and Research (AHRQ)

540 Gaither Road
Rockville, MD 20850
(301) 427-1364
Website: <http://www.ahrq.gov/fund/index.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

1600 Clifton Road
Atlanta, GA 30333
(800) 232-4636
cdcinfo@cdc.gov
Website: <http://www.cdc.gov/od/pgo/funding/grants/grantmain.shtm>

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)

Office of Acquisition and Grants Management
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21244
(800) 267-2323
Website: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov>

Clinical Education Integration

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act authorizes the Secretary of HHS to award competitive grants to medical, dental, and nursing schools, and to other graduate health education programs to create demonstration projects aimed at creating curricula that would integrate health information technology into the clinical education of health care professionals.

Eligible applicants are schools of medicine, osteopathic medicine, dentistry or pharmacy, a graduate program in behavioral or mental health, a graduate school of nursing or physician assistant studies, or an institution with a graduate medical education program in any of the previously listed fields. Clinical Education grants can not cover more than 50% of the costs of any activity for which assistance is provided, though the Secretary has the authority to waive this limit.

To date, no further details about this program have been released. In the coming days, I encourage you to visit the Official Recovery website listed above for more information.

Medical Health Informatics Education Grants

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act authorizes the Secretary of HHS to work with the Director of the National Science Foundation to provide financial assistance to universities to establish or expand the study and teaching of health information technology. Under the Recovery Act, funds are designated for undergraduate or masters degree programs teaching both health care and information technology students to meet goals for more efficient utilization and development of health information technologies.

Funds can be used to develop new curriculum, recruit or retain medical students, acquire equipment necessary for academic instruction of these programs, and to establish bridge programs aimed at improving transitions from medical school to health informatics fields. Preference will be given to pre-existing education and training programs and programs that are designed to be completed in less than six months.

To date, no further details about this program have been released. In the coming days, I encourage you to visit the Official Recovery website listed above for more information.

State Grant Opportunities

The National Coordinator of Health and Information Technology is authorized to award planning and implementation grants to states or qualified state-designated entities to facilitate and expand electronic health information exchange. To become a qualified state-designated entity an organization must be a not-for-profit entity with broad stakeholder representation on its governing board that can demonstrate that one of its principal goals is to use the funds for health information technology according to the national standards established by the Department of Health and Human Services.

Grants to states and state-designated entities would require a match of at least \$1 for each \$10 of federal funds for FY2011, at least \$1 of each \$7 of federal funds in FY2012, and at least \$1 for each \$3 of federal funds in FY2013 and each subsequent year.

To date, no further details about this program have been released. In the coming days, I encourage you to visit the Official Recovery website listed above for more information.