

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 330

To establish grant programs to encourage energy-efficient economic development and green job training and creation, and to establish the Metro Area Green Institute to produce and disseminate best practice information to economic and workforce development initiatives undertaken by metropolitan communities nationally.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 8, 2009

Ms. LEE of California introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

A BILL

To establish grant programs to encourage energy-efficient economic development and green job training and creation, and to establish the Metro Area Green Institute to produce and disseminate best practice information to economic and workforce development initiatives undertaken by metropolitan communities nationally.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Metro Economies
5 Green Act” or “MEGA”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

2 In this Act:

3 (1) GREEN JOBS.—The term “green jobs”
4 means well-paying, high-skill, career-track jobs that
5 contribute directly to preserving or enhancing envi-
6 ronmental quality and promote energy efficiency and
7 energy technology deployment, including jobs involv-
8 ing—

9 (A) energy-efficient construction;

10 (B) retrofitting public and private build-
11 ings;

12 (C) installing solar panels, wind turbines,
13 and other low-carbon or carbon-neutral power
14 sources;

15 (D) constructing transit lines;

16 (E) environmental remediation activities;

17 (F) installation of low-carbon infrastruc-
18 ture;

19 (G) landscaping; and

20 (H) developing or deploying—

21 (i) sustainable energy technologies;

22 (ii) low-carbon electricity technologies;

23 (iii) advanced bio-fuels;

24 (iv) carbon dioxide capture and stor-
25 age systems;

1 (v) electric and plug-in hybrid electric
2 vehicles; and

3 (vi) high-efficiency consumer prod-
4 ucts.

5 (2) GREEN INDUSTRY.—The term “green in-
6 dustry” means existing or emerging industry sectors,
7 small businesses, and micro-enterprise initiatives
8 that create or involve green jobs.

9 (3) HIGH NEEDS.—The term “high needs”
10 means, with respect to an individual, an individual
11 who is—

12 (A) unemployed, with a high school degree
13 or lesser educational attainment;

14 (B) working full-time, but living in pov-
15 erty, as determined by national poverty indica-
16 tors; or

17 (C) marginally employed, as defined by the
18 Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department
19 of Labor.

20 (4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
21 the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

22 (5) UNIT OF GENERAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT.—
23 The term “unit of general local government” has the
24 meaning given such term in section 102 of the

1 Housing and Community Development Act of 1974
2 (42 U.S.C. 5302).

3 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

4 The Congress makes the following findings:

5 (1) WORKFORCE TRENDS.—

6 (A) The U.S. Conference of Mayors in its
7 report “U.S. Metro Economies: Engines of
8 America’s Growth” states that the metropolitan
9 areas of the United States generated 85.9 per-
10 cent of jobs in the United States, 90.1 percent
11 of labor income, and 89.9 percent of gross do-
12 mestic product in 2007. Since 2000, United
13 States metropolitan economies contributed 90.5
14 percent, or more than \$4 trillion, of the growth
15 in the national economy. In 2007, such commu-
16 nities accounted for 92 percent of national eco-
17 nomic growth. In sum, the gross metropolitan
18 product of the 10 largest metropolitan areas in
19 2007 (\$4.72 trillion) exceeded the combined
20 output of 36 States.

21 (B) Similarly, in its report “MetroNation:
22 How U.S. Metropolitan Areas Fuel American
23 Prosperity”, the Brookings Institution states
24 that the 100 largest metropolitan economies
25 gather significant shares of innovative activity

1 (78 percent of patent activity in the United
2 States), educated workers (75 percent of grad-
3 uate degree holders), and critical infrastructure
4 (79 percent of air cargo in the United States).

5 (C) The American workforce is diversifying
6 at a time when many minority and urban com-
7 munities continue to encounter barriers to gain-
8 ful employment. Projections from the Census
9 Bureau show that non-Hispanic Whites will
10 represent less than half of the Nation’s prime
11 working-age (25 to 64) population by 2050. Be-
12 tween 2008 and 2050, Blacks and Hispanics
13 will grow from about 25 percent to nearly 40
14 percent of the working-age population, and will
15 account for more than 90 percent of total
16 growth in that age range. Individuals from mi-
17 nority communities are largely concentrated in
18 metropolitan areas. Furthermore, such commu-
19 nities remain disproportionately affected by nu-
20 merous challenges related to education, employ-
21 ment, and incarceration.

22 (D) In its report “Renewable Energy and
23 Energy Efficiency: Economic Drivers for the
24 21st Century American” the American Solar
25 Energy Society estimates that, in 2006, more

1 than 8 million Americans worked in green in-
2 dustries, generating \$933 billion of revenue. By
3 2030, the Society further estimates that green
4 industries will account for more than 40 million
5 American jobs, generating over \$4.5 trillion in
6 annual revenue.

7 (E) As indicated in “Green-Collar Jobs in
8 American Cities”, issued jointly by Green for
9 All and the Apollo Alliance, green industries
10 promote employment opportunities that are nec-
11 essarily local. Therefore, jobs in emerging green
12 industries will offer sustainable employment op-
13 portunities to Americans for decades to come.

14 (2) CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE
15 NATION’S METRO COMMUNITIES.—

16 (A) According to the report “Cities in Cri-
17 sis: A Special Analytic Report on High School
18 Graduation”, of the Editorial Projects in Edu-
19 cation Research Center, nearly 40 percent of
20 the Nation’s 50 largest metropolitan areas suf-
21 fer high school graduation rates below 50 per-
22 cent. Metropolitan communities with historical
23 ties to traditional manufacturing industries are
24 among those demonstrating particularly dis-
25 couraging high school graduation rates. The

1 dual challenges associated with contracting
2 labor markets and fledgling academic capacities
3 have left these, and many other metropolitan
4 communities, with compounding barriers to job
5 creation and economic development.

6 (B) According to the Department of Jus-
7 tice, Office of Justice Programs, nearly 650,000
8 people are released from Federal and State in-
9 carceration into communities nationwide each
10 year, about 1,600 a day, with the majority of
11 these individuals returning to the Nation's met-
12 ropolitan communities.

13 (C) Transitional jobs programs have been
14 proven to help people with criminal records to
15 successfully return to the workplace and to the
16 community, and therefore can reduce recidi-
17 vism. Such programs, along with traditional
18 technical training programs provide at-risk indi-
19 viduals in our Nation's metropolitan commu-
20 nities with concrete opportunities for long-term
21 economic self-sufficiency.

22 **SEC. 4. METRO AREA GREEN ZONES.**

23 (a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to em-
24 power communities to provide stable employment in green

1 industries, so such communities may become self-sufficient
2 and gain long-term economic stability.

3 (b) METRO AREA GREEN ZONE GRANT PROGRAM.—

4 The Secretary may establish a competitive program to
5 make grants to units of general local government to sup-
6 port and establish green job programs that—

7 (1) target low-income, difficult-to-employ, and
8 formerly incarcerated persons residing in the area or
9 community served by such unit of general local gov-
10 ernment; and

11 (2) involve local business, academia, trade asso-
12 ciations, nonprofits, and other stakeholders in en-
13 ergy-efficient economic development and green job
14 training and creation.

15 (c) ELIGIBILITY.—Grants may be made only to units
16 of general local government that—

17 (1) have a population in excess of 300,000; and

18 (2) submit to the Secretary a multi-year imple-
19 mentation plan that provides assurances to the Sec-
20 retary that such unit of general local government
21 will use such grant amounts to carry out the activi-
22 ties under subsection (e).

23 (d) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this sec-
24 tion, the Secretary may give priority to any applicant unit
25 of general local government that provides assurances to

1 the Secretary, or demonstrates to the Secretary, as appli-
2 cable, that such unit of general local government—

3 (1) has entered, or will enter into partnership
4 agreements with local nonprofit organizations, com-
5 munity and technical colleges, organized labor orga-
6 nizations, and local economic development boards to
7 develop and implement a coordinated, systemic, and
8 sustainable strategy to promote economic develop-
9 ment through efforts to increase green jobs and
10 technologies in low-income communities;

11 (2) has engaged and consulted, or will engage
12 and consult with relevant county and State agencies
13 to help develop and implement a strategy to promote
14 economic development through efforts to increase
15 green jobs and technologies in low-income commu-
16 nities;

17 (3) has the ability to complement and con-
18 tribute to national, regional, and State goals related
19 to green jobs and green industries;

20 (4) has a demonstrable commitment to green
21 economic and workforce development;

22 (5) has the ability to coordinate with activities
23 identified in the Workforce Investment Act of 1998
24 (29 U.S.C. 2801 et seq.) and other federally spon-
25 sored programs;

1 (6) has a plan to engage local industry and
2 small business in creating green jobs both locally
3 and regionally;

4 (7) is located within a 50 mile radius of a De-
5 partment of Energy National Energy Laboratory
6 and technology centers or a research-intensive insti-
7 tution of higher education engaged in energy re-
8 search or green job creation;

9 (8) has a local unemployment rate at least 1.5
10 times greater than the national rate;

11 (9) has at least 20 percent of the local work-
12 force employed in the lowest-paying economic sec-
13 tors;

14 (10) has not less than 35 percent of households
15 that have female head-of-households;

16 (11) has more than 20 parolees, probationers,
17 or parolees and probationers per 1,000 residents;

18 (12) serves individuals in families that meet the
19 lower living standard income level, as defined by the
20 Department of Labor, Employment and Training
21 Administration;

22 (13) has a local population of which at least 8
23 percent are classified as high-need with regard to
24 employment opportunities; and

1 (14) meets any other criteria the Secretary de-
2 termines appropriate.

3 (e) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—A unit of general local
4 government receiving a grant under this section may use
5 grant funds to—

6 (1) create model curricula, education, and train-
7 ing opportunities to provide low-income, under-
8 served, or otherwise displaced program participants
9 with skills necessary to acquire long-term green jobs;

10 (2) provide job placement services, in partner-
11 ship with local green industries;

12 (3) support program partners, subdivisions of
13 municipal government, small business, and non-
14 profits for further coordination with national, State,
15 and regional efforts, local industry, local small busi-
16 ness, and nationally sponsored activities in the
17 Metro Area Green Zone to support overall program
18 enhancement and expand local and regional green
19 employment opportunities, including providing—

20 (A) stipends;

21 (B) tax credits;

22 (C) financing mechanisms; and

23 (D) technical and other assistance;

1 (4) provide green job creation incentives
2 through support of local businesses and industry sec-
3 tors to create green jobs;

4 (5) provide services such as childcare, alcohol
5 and drug dependence treatment, and mental health
6 services, as necessary, to underserved, low-income,
7 displaced, hard-to-employ, and formerly incarcerated
8 individuals to facilitate the use of the training and
9 job placement services provided by paragraphs (1)
10 and (2);

11 (6) provide underserved, low-income, displaced,
12 hard-to-employ, and formerly incarcerated individ-
13 uals with green jobs and business opportunities; and

14 (7) carry out any other activity the Secretary
15 considers appropriate.

16 (f) NUMBER AND AMOUNT OF GRANTS.—

17 (1) NUMBER.—The Secretary may make grants
18 under this section to not more than 10 units of gen-
19 eral local government.

20 (2) AMOUNT.—Subject to the availability of ap-
21 propriations, the Secretary shall make a grant to
22 each unit of general local government selected of not
23 more than \$15,000,000 each fiscal year for 5 years.

24 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
25 authorized to be appropriated for grants under this section

1 \$150,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2010 through
2 2015.

3 **SEC. 5. MINI-METRO GREEN GRANT PROGRAM.**

4 (a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to en-
5 sure the participation of smaller, developing municipalities
6 that are ineligible by population to receive grants under
7 section 4 in activities such as the activities authorized
8 under such section.

9 (b) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary may establish
10 a competitive program to make grants to units of general
11 local government eligible under subsection (c) to support
12 and establish programs that engage smaller communities
13 in green economic and workforce development.

14 (c) ELIGIBILITY.—Grants may be made only to units
15 of general local government that—

16 (1) have a population of not less than 50,000
17 and not more than 125,000; and

18 (2) submit to the Secretary a multi-year imple-
19 mentation plan that provides assurances to the Sec-
20 retary that such unit of general local government
21 will use such grant amounts to carry out the activi-
22 ties under subsection (e).

23 (d) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this sec-
24 tion, the Secretary may give priority to any applicant unit
25 of general local government that provides assurances to

1 the Secretary, or demonstrates to the Secretary, as appli-
2 cable, that such unit of general local government—

3 (1) has a commitment to promoting green jobs
4 and green technologies;

5 (2) has a plan to engage local industry and
6 small business in creating green jobs both locally
7 and regionally;

8 (3) has a local unemployment rate at least 25
9 percent greater than the national rate, or for the 10-
10 year period ending upon application for a grant
11 under this section has a local unemployment rate at
12 least 10 percent greater than the national rate;

13 (4) serves individuals in families that meet the
14 lower living standard income level, as defined by the
15 Department of Labor, Employment and Training
16 Administration;

17 (5) has a population of which more than 20
18 percent are involved in gang activity;

19 (6) has a population of which more than 0.5
20 percent are current parolees;

21 (7) has a high school drop-out rate at least 10
22 percent greater than the national average;

23 (8) has at least one local publicly funded work-
24 force investment system;

1 (9) has been identified pursuant to State or
2 Federal law as an enterprise zone;

3 (10) has an existing partnership with a local
4 publicly funded workforce investment system;

5 (11) is a designated Environmental Protection
6 Agency Nonattainment area; and

7 (12) meets any other criteria the Secretary de-
8 termines appropriate.

9 (e) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—A unit of general local
10 government receiving a grant under this section may use
11 grant funds to—

12 (1) participate in programs and activities pro-
13 vided by the Metro Area Green Institute established
14 under section 6;

15 (2) provide job placement services, in partner-
16 ship with local green industries;

17 (3) provide higher level job skills, and higher
18 paying employment opportunities (including micro-
19 enterprise business in underserved communities) to
20 low-income and formerly incarcerated individuals;

21 (4) provide incentives for further coordination
22 with local industry and small business to expand
23 local and regional green jobs;

24 (5) provide services such as childcare, alcohol
25 and drug dependence treatment, and mental health

1 services, as necessary, to underserved, low-income,
2 displaced, hard-to-employ, and formerly incarcerated
3 individuals to facilitate the use of the training, job
4 placement, and employment services provided by
5 paragraphs (3) and (4); and

6 (6) carry out any other activity the Secretary
7 considers appropriate.

8 (f) NUMBER AND AMOUNT OF GRANTS.—

9 (1) NUMBER.—The Secretary may make grants
10 under this section to not more than 10 units of gen-
11 eral local government.

12 (2) AMOUNT.—Subject to the availability of ap-
13 propriations, the Secretary shall make a grant to
14 each unit of general local government selected of not
15 more than \$1,000,000 each fiscal year for 5 years.

16 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
17 authorized to be appropriated for grants under this section
18 \$10,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2010 through
19 2015.

20 **SEC. 6. METRO AREA GREEN INSTITUTE.**

21 (a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to es-
22 tablish the Metro Area Green Institute to serve as a na-
23 tional center for technical assistance, training, research,
24 information dissemination, and resource center to support

1 municipally based, green economic and workforce develop-
2 ment efforts.

3 (b) GRANT OR CONTRACT AWARD.—The Secretary
4 shall select one unit of general local government or non-
5 profit organization designated by a unit of general local
6 government to establish and operate a Metro Area Green
7 Institute in accordance with this section and may make
8 a grant or enter into a contract under this section to pro-
9 vide assistance for such Institute.

10 (c) GRANT OR CONTRACT AMOUNT.—The amount
11 provided for a grant or contract under this section shall
12 not exceed \$5,000,000 each fiscal year for 5 years.

13 (d) ELIGIBILITY.—The Secretary may not make a
14 grant or enter into a contract under this section to an
15 applicant unit of general local government or an applicant
16 nonprofit organization designated by a unit of general
17 local government unless the applicant provides assurances
18 to the Secretary, or demonstrates to the Secretary, as ap-
19 plicable, that such unit or designated nonprofit organiza-
20 tion—

21 (1) is within a 20-mile radius of at least one
22 Department of Energy National Energy Laboratory
23 and at least one research-intensive institution of
24 higher education;

1 (2) has demonstrable experience with green
2 workforce development and job creation;

3 (3) has an existing green jobs collaborative in-
4 volving regional, local, county, State, and public and
5 private stakeholders that targets low-income under-
6 served populations residing in metropolitan areas;

7 (4) has entered into or is prepared to enter into
8 a partnership agreement with a Department of En-
9 ergy National Energy Laboratory and a research-in-
10 tensive institution of higher education that are with-
11 in a 20-mile radius of such unit of general local gov-
12 ernment or the area served by such nonprofit orga-
13 nization designated by a unit of general local govern-
14 ment; and

15 (5) is in a community meeting the criteria
16 under paragraphs (8) to (14) of section 4(d) of this
17 Act.

18 (e) ACTIVITIES.—To carry out the purposes of this
19 section, the Metro Area Green Institute shall—

20 (1) evaluate the efficacy of programs funded
21 under sections 4, 5, and 7;

22 (2) sponsor workshops and conferences on
23 green jobs, technology transfer, business develop-
24 ment, green economic development strategies for
25 metropolitan economies seeking to engage low-in-

1 come under-served and other displaced populations,
2 and any other topics relevant to green industries;

3 (3) compile for dissemination to green work-
4 force development and job creation programs nation-
5 ally, and so disseminate, information and data re-
6 lated to the programs under sections 4, 5, and 7,
7 and other related national, regional, and local activi-
8 ties related to green workforce development and eco-
9 nomic development, including best practice data and
10 green worker training techniques;

11 (4) monitor and investigate green workforce de-
12 velopment and job creation programs nationally with
13 a focus on initiatives targeting high-poverty commu-
14 nities and high-need communities;

15 (5) assess the efficacy of green economic and
16 workforce development programs;

17 (6) create and maintain a certification program
18 to train workers in green jobs;

19 (7) encourage local and municipal governments
20 to engage in workforce development and job creation
21 activities in green industry;

22 (8) provide capacity-building and related tech-
23 nical assistance to green workforce development ini-
24 tiatives nationally, with emphasis on communities re-

1 ceiving funding under sections 4 and 5 of this Act;
2 and

3 (9) produce and make available to local govern-
4 ments, nonprofits, academic institutions, and the
5 Department of Housing and Urban Development lit-
6 erature and media tools codifying best practice tech-
7 niques and supplemental metadata analysis.

8 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
9 authorized to be appropriated for the grant or contract
10 under this section \$5,000,000 for each of the fiscal years
11 2010 through 2015.

12 **SEC. 7. ALTERNATIVE GREEN ACADEMIES PROGRAM.**

13 (a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to en-
14 able municipalities to partner with nonprofit organiza-
15 tions, local education agencies, community and technical
16 colleges, trade associations, and local businesses to provide
17 green job training, employment opportunities, and other
18 life skills to high school drop-outs, formerly incarcerated
19 youth, and individuals unable to attend traditional institu-
20 tions of higher education.

21 (b) ESTABLISHMENT OF GRANT PROGRAM.—The
22 Secretary may establish a competitive program to make
23 grants to units of general local government to support and
24 establish programs that—

1 (1) provide green job training, employment op-
2 portunities, and other life skills to high school drop-
3 outs, formerly incarcerated youth, and individuals
4 unable to attend traditional institutions of higher
5 education; and

6 (2) involve collaboration between local or mu-
7 nicipal governments, community or technical col-
8 leges, local businesses, trade associations and others.

9 (c) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this sec-
10 tion, the Secretary may give priority to any applicant unit
11 of general local government that provides assurances to
12 the Secretary, or demonstrates to the Secretary, as appli-
13 cable, that such unit of general local government—

14 (1) has a plan to engage at least one commu-
15 nity or technical college in green job training;

16 (2) has a plan to engage local industry, trade
17 associations, and small business in creating green
18 jobs in underserved communities;

19 (3) has projected growth, over the next five
20 years, in net new jobs requiring at minimum a high
21 school diploma;

22 (4) has an estimated high school drop-out rate
23 of greater than 35 percent based upon 2007 statis-
24 tical data, or 10 percent greater than the national
25 rate;

1 (5) has a local unemployment rate at least 1.5
2 times greater than the national rate;

3 (6) has at least 20 percent of the local work-
4 force employed in the lowest-paying economic sec-
5 tors;

6 (7) has not less than 35 percent of households
7 that have female head-of-households;

8 (8) has more than 20 parolees, probationers, or
9 parolees and probationers per 1,000 residents;

10 (9) has a local population of which at least 8
11 percent are classified as high-need with regard to
12 employment opportunities; and

13 (10) meets any other criteria the Secretary de-
14 termines appropriate.

15 (d) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—A unit of general local
16 government receiving a grant under this section may use
17 grant funds to collaborate with local community and tech-
18 nical colleges and local businesses, trade associations, and
19 other entities to—

20 (1) establish an inclusive education and training
21 center or centers to serve as an alternative academy
22 for high school drop-outs, formerly incarcerated, and
23 other difficult-to-employ individuals;

1 (2) develop curricula to provide program par-
2 ticipants with skills necessary to achieve sustainable
3 employment in green industries;

4 (3) establish mentorship programs with local
5 green industries and small businesses to provide pro-
6 gram participants with access to on-the-job training;

7 (4) provide job placement services, in partner-
8 ship with local green industries and small busi-
9 nesses;

10 (5) provide wage stipends to program partici-
11 pants receiving green job training; and

12 (6) provide services such as childcare, alcohol
13 and drug dependence treatment, and mental health
14 services, as necessary, to underserved, low-income,
15 displaced, hard-to-employ, and formerly incarcerated
16 individuals to facilitate the use of the training, job
17 placement, and employment provided by paragraphs
18 (1) to (5).

19 (e) NUMBER AND AMOUNT OF GRANTS.—

20 (1) NUMBER.—The Secretary may make grants
21 under this section to not more than 10 units of gen-
22 eral local government.

23 (2) AMOUNT.—Subject to the availability of ap-
24 propriations, the Secretary shall make a grant to

1 each unit of general local government selected of
2 \$2,000,000 each fiscal year for 5 years.

3 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
4 authorized to be appropriated for grants under this section
5 \$20,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2010 through
6 2015.

○