

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about the Green Jobs Act of 2007

## 1. What is the Green Jobs Act of 2007?

The Green Jobs Act of 2007 authorized \$125 million per year to create an Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Worker Training Program as an amendment to the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). The Green Jobs Act (GJA) is an initial pilot program to identify needed skills, develop training programs, and train workers for jobs in a range of industries – including energy efficient building, construction and retrofits, renewable electric power, energy efficient vehicles, biofuels, and manufacturing that produces sustainable products and uses sustainable processes and materials. It targets a broad range of populations for eligibility, but has a special focus on creating “green pathways out of poverty.”

The Green Jobs Act became Title X of the Energy Independence and Security Act (often referred to as the "2007 Energy Bill"), which Congress passed and the President signed in late 2007. The Program will be administered by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) in consultation with the Department of Energy.

## 2. Why is the Green Jobs Act important?

America is making commitments to producing clean energy and fighting climate change. Industries are emerging and growing to help us fulfill those commitments. Those same industries are facing a shortage of skilled people who can do the required work – retrofiting buildings, installing solar panels, maintaining wind farms, manufacturing component parts, building new facilities and infrastructure, etc. The GJA will help identify the most needed skills and train workers for those jobs. It channels grants to labor-management training programs, providing a pathway for organized labor into the emerging clean energy sector. Very importantly, the GJA also recognizes that there are millions of Americans who are searching for employment pathways out of poverty. The Act provides the support, training, and opportunity for low-income people to access good paying jobs and careers in the growing green economy.

## 3. What exactly does the GJA do?

The GJA authorizes spending for 5 related green job programs. (Note that the GJA was an *authorization*. Separately, Congress must follow with an *appropriation* to actually allocate funds for these programs. See "When will the money be available?" below.) The programs within the Green Jobs Act are:

- National Research Program (10 percent of total appropriation) – The Department of Labor (DOL), acting through the Bureau of Labor Statistics,

will collect and analyze the labor market data necessary to track workforce trends and identify the types of skills and green jobs we need to train people for. The DOL will use this information to provide technical assistance and capacity building to the training partnerships described below. 10 percent of the amount appropriated will be dedicated to this program (\$12.5 million if fully funded).

- National Energy Training Partnership Grants (30 percent) – DOL will award competitive grants to non-profit partnerships to carry out training that leads to economic self-sufficiency and to develop an energy efficiency and renewable energy industries workforce. The partnerships must include the equal participation of industry and labor, and may include related stakeholders like local workforce investments boards, educational institutions, and community-based organizations. 30 percent of the amount appropriated will be dedicated to these grants (\$37.5 million if fully funded).
- State Labor Market Research, Information, and Labor Exchange Research Program (10 percent) – DOL will award competitive grants to states to administer labor market and labor exchange information programs, in coordination with the one-stop delivery system. Activities will also include the identification of job openings; the administration of skill and aptitude testing; and counseling, case management, and job referrals. These programs will be administered by the state agency that administers the employment service and unemployment insurance programs and services can only be delivered by state agency staff. 10 percent of the amount appropriated will be dedicated to this program (\$12.5 million if fully funded).
- State Energy Training Partnership Program (30 percent) – DOL will award competitive grants to states to enable them to administer, via the state agency that administers their employment service and unemployment insurance programs, renewable energy and energy efficiency workforce development programs. It will award grants to partnerships that essentially mirror the national partnerships in their make-up. Priority will be given to states that demonstrate that their activities meet state and national policies associated with energy efficiency, renewable energy and reduction of emissions. 30 percent of the amount appropriated will be dedicated to this program (\$37.5 million if fully funded).
- Pathways Out Of Poverty Demonstration Program (20 percent) – DOL will award competitive grants to training partnerships that serve individuals under 200% of the federal poverty line or a locally defined self-sufficiency standard. The partnerships must include community-based organizations, educational institutions, industry, and labor; demonstrate experience implementing training programs and recruit and support participants to the

successful completion of training; and coordinate activities with the WIA system. In awarding grants, priority will be given to partnerships that target low-income adults and youth and plan to implement various strategies that enable access to, and successful completion of, training, including ensuring that supportive services are delivered by organizations with direct access to and experience with targeted populations. 20 percent of the amount appropriated will be dedicated to this demonstration (\$25 million if fully funded).

#### **4. Who will get the money?**

As described above, the Green Jobs Act is divided into 5 programs. Once Congress appropriates funding for the GJA, money will ultimately flow through the following:

- National Research Program, carried out by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- State Research and Labor Exchange Program, in which state governments conduct their own labor market and related research and provide labor exchange services. The legislation does not specify the number of grants or the size of the grants.
- National Energy Training Partnership Grants, in which DOL directly awards funds to multi-stakeholder workforce training partnerships. Grants will be awarded to ensure geographic diversity across different regions of the country. The legislation does not specify the size of the grants.
- State Energy Training Partnership Program, in which DOL awards funds to state governments, which then re-grant the funds to multi-stakeholder workforce training partnerships. The legislation does not specify how many states will receive grants or the size of the grants.
- Pathways Out of Poverty Program, in which DOL directly awards funds to training partnerships that have a specific focus on serving low-income individuals. The legislation does not specify the number of grants or the size of the grants in this program, but it does say that the grants "shall be awarded to ensure geographic diversity."

In all programs except the National Research Program, DOL will award the grants competitively. For more detail on the requirements and conditions for these various funding streams, see "What exactly does the GJA do?" above.

#### **5. Will this affect federal funding for other workforce development programs?**

No. The Green Jobs Act authorizes new funding for green-collar job training. It does not reallocate existing training dollars. This is good and important. Workforce development professionals and others widely acknowledge that current appropriations for programs under the Workforce Investment Act fall short of employer and worker demand.

## **6. Who is helped make this happen?**

The bill was sponsored in the House by Rep. Hilda Solis (D-CA) and Rep. John Tierney (D-MA), with significant support from Rep. George Miller (D-CA). House Speaker Nancy Pelosi was a champion of the bill from the beginning. The Senate version was sponsored by Senators Sanders (D-VT) and Clinton (D-NY).

Some of the organizations that were involved in drafting and advocating for the bill include (in alphabetical order): Apollo Alliance, Center for American Progress, Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, Green For All, The Workforce Alliance.

## **7. When will the money be available?**

In all likelihood federal grants associated with this program will not be available until at least 2009. It is important to note that while funds were authorized for the GJA, they were not appropriated, so full funding will have to be secured in the next appropriations cycle – which will not be completed until late 2008. It is also possible that Congress will find a way to fund the GJA programs in a supplementary spending bill or an economic stimulus package before the end of 2008.

Once Congress appropriates the funds, DOL will need to design and implement the various grant programs in the GJA. The legislation does require that DOL, in consultation with the Department of Energy, to establish the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Worker Training Program no later than six months after the date of enactment, which falls in May of 2008. However, it remains unclear how DOL will respond to this requirement, since funding is not yet in place. DOL could focus on creating an administrative framework and developing a bare bones program in anticipation of dedicated funding in the future.

Green jobs advocates can help ensure that the GJA is funded and implemented in a timely manner. (See “How can I help?” below.)

## **8. How can we prepare to apply for grants?**

The grant programs established by the GJA will give priority to multi-stakeholder partnerships that can demonstrate an ability to successfully engage target populations in training programs in ways that help individuals achieve economic self-sufficiency and that help the country achieve policy goals associated with energy efficiency, renewable energy, and the reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases. Priority will also be given to efforts that can leverage additional public and private resources to fund training programs.

In many cases, robust labor-management partnerships and other training programs exist and provide high-quality training in related fields, such as building energy management or solar photovoltaic (PV) installation. These programs, if they engage the necessary

partners, should be in a position to apply immediately for funding when it becomes available.

In other cases, good partnerships could take some time to establish working relationships, to develop consensus on a program that could be funded with GJA grants, and to leverage additional resources. Starting now will give your partnership more time to put everything in place. Establishing a green jobs training partnership will also be valuable to local green job efforts, and may be able to draw on other public or private funding sources, even before federal funds become available.

### **9. How can I help ensure that Congress allocates funding for the Green Jobs Act?**

Supporters of the GJA will need to urge members of Congress to appropriate the full amount of funding as soon as possible. We will also want to encourage DOL to establish and implement the grant programs in a timely manner. You can help by going to this website and signing up for action alerts on this topic.

<http://www.greenforall.org/resources/getinvolved.html>

### **10. Is the funding enough?**

No. The GJA is only a pilot program that will help us to create models for green-collar job training that must be expanded later. Most observers expect significant climate legislation to be voted on by Congress and sent to the President for signature in 2009, so we need to be sure expanded funding for GJA is included that and other clean energy and workforce policies.

### **11. Where can I get more information about the Green Jobs Act?**

To read the full language of the Green Jobs Act (Title X of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007), download the PDF here:

<http://www.greenforall.org/resources/green-jobs-act.pdf>

*This FAQ was prepared by the Apollo Alliance, the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, Green for All, and The Workforce Alliance.*