

U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), and U.S. Representative Peter Welch (D-Vt.) on Tuesday announced over \$19 million in recovery funding for energy efficiency, weatherization and renewable energy programs in Vermont.

The Department of Energy this week released the second half of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding for two Vermont programs geared toward reducing the state's energy use and creating jobs. Vermont's State Energy Program received the remaining \$11 million of \$22 million allocated to Vermont. The state's Weatherization Assistance Program received the final \$8.4 million of the \$16.8 million Vermont was due.

"These federal recovery funds are providing a critical boost to Vermont's economy by putting people to work and helping consumers, businesses and non-profits save money on their energy bills," said Leahy, Sanders and Welch. "At the same time, these programs make the long-term investments necessary to make Vermont's schools and government buildings more efficient and reduce the state's contribution to harmful carbon emissions."

The State Energy Program will fund projects that prioritize energy savings, create or retain jobs, increase the use of renewable energy and reduce carbon emissions. Specifically, Vermont will use the money to deploy cost-effective and environmentally sustainable electric power resources to consumers, non-profits and businesses; fund revolving loan and grant programs for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects in schools and government buildings; and install thermal solar renewable energy systems in low-income residences.

The Weatherization Assistance Program funding will help families save money by making their homes more energy efficient, resulting in average savings of 32 percent for heating bills and hundreds of dollars per year on overall energy bills. Funds will be directed through the Vermont Office of Economic Opportunity to local organizations throughout the state and will be available to families making up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level – or about \$44,000 a year for a family of four. Up to 20 percent of the money will be available for job training.