

A \$4.8 million economic stimulus grant awarded today to the Central Vermont Community Action Council will train about 2,400 Vermonters under a green jobs program authored by Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.).

The Vermont grant – one of 25 announced by the U.S. Department of Labor – was among the largest awarded under the \$100 million Energy Training Partnership program. The awards ranged from \$1.4 million to \$5 million.

“One way to move our country toward energy independence, slow global warming and create good-paying jobs is to use energy in a smarter way,” said Sanders, the chairman of the Senate Green Jobs and New Economy Subcommittee. “As a nation we have to cut consumption by making our homes and businesses more energy efficient and move to renewable energies. Trouble is, today you would have a hard time finding workers qualified to do those jobs. This funding helps address the problem by training thousands of Vermonters for good-paying green jobs.”

Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) said, “Vermont is right, and early, to make a strong and sustained commitment to cutting-edge green jobs. This project continues the training necessary to help families and businesses transform to a greener economy.”

“Vermont has long been a leader in embracing the economic opportunity inherent in combating climate change,” said Rep. Peter Welch, a member of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. “This grant is a recognition not only of our state’s past successes but also of our enormous future potential to take the lead in creating green energy jobs. It will help homeowners and business owners save money on energy bills, reduce carbon emissions and create jobs Vermonters need.”

The Central Vermont Community Action Council will use the grant to help find good-paying green jobs for the unemployed, underemployed, veterans, women, the disabled, and high school dropouts. The council will partner with Vermont Technical College, the Vermont Office of Economic Opportunity, Vermont Works for Women, Vermont Coalition for Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs, organized labor and industry.

The project will provide intensive case management and training to 398 individuals, and ensure that nearly 2,000 others receive training. Participants will receive certificates – including the Homebuilders and Remodelers Association’s Certified Green Professional certificate – or apprenticeship and licensing credits recognized by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

“Our outstanding award recipients were selected because their proposed projects will connect workers to career pathways in green industries and occupations through diverse partnerships,” said Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis.

Sanders authored the Green Jobs Act with then-Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton. Then-Rep. Solis was the lead House sponsor of the Green Jobs Act. Their legislation, which became law as part of the 2007 energy bill, was funded for the first time as part of last year’s \$787 billion economic stimulus legislation.