

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 6, 2010

CONTACT: Jennifer Berlin (Reed), 202-224-4642 Matt Thornton (Whitehouse), 202-228-6293 Kerrie Bennett (Kennedy), 401-473-9386 Joy Fox (Langevin), 401-732-9400

RI Delegation Announces \$3.7 Million Recovery Act Funding to Promote Green Job Growth

WASHINGTON, DC -- In an effort to help create green jobs and boost Rhode Island's construction and manufacturing industries, Rhode Island's Congressional delegation today announced that the Providence Plan's Building Futures program will receive \$3.72 million in Recovery Act funding to launch an Energy Training Partnership. This grant will enable Building Futures to prepare approximately 1,600 hundred Rhode Islanders for careers in energy efficient-construction and renewable-power industries over two years.

In November, Senators Reed and Whitehouse and Representatives Kennedy and Langevin wrote a letter to Labor Secretary Hilda Solis in support of the Providence Plan's grant application. Secretary Solis joined Senator Reed and Representatives Kennedy and Langevin for a tour of the Exeter Job Corps Academy earlier in the fall to learn firsthand about Rhode Island's job training programs and the vital role they play in strengthening the state's workforce.

"Rebuilding Rhode Island's manufacturing industry is critical to creating jobs and reversing our state's economic decline. This is another example of Recovery Act funds helping our state overcome the last decade's legacy of job loss by investing in our local economy, strengthening our workforce, and further advancing our green-technology industries," said Reed. "Not only will this grant enable the Providence Plan to train 1,600 Rhode Islanders for a career in the construction industry, but it will also facilitate the adoption of more environmentally friendly practices throughout the state."

"Investing in clean energy jobs will provide a foundation for long-term economic stability in Rhode Island," said Whitehouse. "This funding will help develop a well trained work force for the new clean energy economy, and prepare unemployed Rhode Islanders for the jobs of tomorrow."

"This federal grant will help provide job training and apprenticeships in green technologies for more than 1,000 local workers. A skilled workforce is essential to the development of a robust green economy, and I am pleased that the state's leaders in industry, education and labor have partnered together for this exciting and important endeavor," said Kennedy.

"Making the Rhode Island workforce competitive for the clean energy jobs of the future is key to our overall economic recovery," said Langevin. "I look forward to following the progress of these organizations as they work together to implement this funding."

Building Future's Energy Training Partnership will use these federal funds to create a pre-apprenticeship model that readies 100 unemployed young, urban residents for green construction careers; work with labor organizations to integrate certified green-training modules into existing apprenticeship curricula to ensure 650 registered apprentices receive green training; and strengthen the technical skills of 850 dislocated workers.

Building Futures is a coalition of industry employers, labor organizations, professional associations, state agencies, and community groups that helps create career opportunities in the building trades for low-

income Rhode Islanders in urban communities through established apprenticeship programs. This benefits Rhode Island's construction sector by helping the industry develop a well-trained workforce.

Building Futures consists of a multi-week, comprehensive evaluation and preparation process to help participants develop the basic skills needed in all construction trades. In addition to providing training and other support services to address barriers to employment, the program assesses the work readiness of the applicants and assists successful graduates in developing careers as registered apprentices. Once placed in a quality apprenticeship program, Building Futures graduates continue to receive support services while they get on-the-job training, earn a salary, and receive benefits.

The Energy Training Partnership grant program, administered by the Department of Labor, will help create green jobs nationwide by providing training for workers to prepare them for careers in efficiency and renewable energy industries.

-end-