

INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP APPALACHIAN ANNOUNCEMENTS

Department of Energy (DOE) and AFL-CIO National Workforce Development System

DOE is taking action to convene industry and labor partners for the lithium battery manufacturing supply chain, focused on energy and automotive communities. Today, DOE announced \$5M for a battery supply chain workforce development initiative that will include training pilot projects that we can learn from and expanded on as the domestic battery industry grows in the coming years. DOE is well positioned to convene the necessary stakeholders to develop a coherent national approach to battery supply chain workforce development.

As part of this effort:

- DOE will support up to five training pilots in energy and automotive communities that bring together industry and labor partners to grow good union jobs in the domestic battery supply chain.
- DOE has been working with the Department of Labor on Secretary Walsh's Apprenticeship Advisory Committee and will further collaborate to ensure that DOE's efforts align with and support the expansion of registered apprenticeships in manufacturing.
- DOE will coordinate with the Federal Consortium for Advanced Batteries (FCAB) and the public-private partnership Li-Bridge alliance's Committee on Workforce and Communities.
- DOE will convene industry and labor leaders to advise on this workforce strategy and the pilots, to make sure they support employer needs and provide a pathway to high-quality jobs for workers.

This announcement follows DOE's recent release of two Notices of Intent to fund projects that bolster domestic battery manufacturing and recycling to support growing electric vehicle and storage demand through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and DOE's comprehensive strategy to ensure a robust and resilient end-to-end supply chain.

Department of Energy (DOE)

DOE's Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management (FECM) announced \$2.2 million in funding for a project that will produce high-strength, lightweight building materials made from domestic coal waste. The waste will be sourced from active coal preparation facilities or existing waste storage structures and converted into building materials that are lighter, less bulky and fire-resistant, for use in residential, commercial and infrastructure applications.

The selected project supports FECM's Carbon Ore Processing Program, which develops innovative uses for coal as the nation undergoes a transformational shift to clean energy and economic growth through the support and development of new carbon-based technologies in U.S. energy communities.

DOE's National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) will manage the selected project:

Modular, Manufactured Homes from Coal-Based Building Materials — X-MAT Carbon Core Composites LLC (Bluefield, West Virginia) and partners will construct a prototype structure to test coal-derived building materials including roof tiles, siding panels, bricks, and blocks. The project will produce a detailed design for a carbon-based building and update the techno-economic analysis to improve the maturity of the technology as it moves closer to a demonstration phase.

DOE Funding: \$2,247,844; Non-DOE Funding: \$700,000; Total Value: \$2,947,844

SPARKZ, Inc.

Sparkz, the next-generation battery manufacturer re-engineering the battery supply chain, announced today it will begin construction in 2022 of a Gigafactory in West Virginia to commercialize their zerocobalt battery which will initially employ 350 workers.

Sparkz will invest significant resources in workforce development and training for West Virginians, partnering with the United Mine Workers of America to train those West Virginians transitioning into the new energy economy.

SPARKZ will be focused on creating a strong and diverse workforce capable of competing against foreign batteries made in China and securing the supply chain.

Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) saw historic increases in economic development funding through the *American Rescue Plan Act*. These included \$300 million for a Coal Communities Commitment, with \$100 million focused on regional planning grants through the Build Back Better Regional Challenge and \$200 million focused on more project-specific Economic Adjustment Assistance grants. This was the first-ever EDA commitment specifically targeted towards coal communities in the history of the agency. To date, EDA has awarded \$4.3 million through EAA for projects in West Virginia and Wyoming, and 12 coal communities were selected as finalists for the Build Back Better Regional Challenge, receiving \$500,000 each in planning grants to prepare for their final applications.

Appalachian Regional Commission

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) announced its next group of POWER grants, focused on creating economic opportunity for communities and regions facing transition from coal (21 grants totaling \$21.4 million). Awards will go to multiple states, including West Virginia. This announcement includes an award to the West Virginia Regional Technology Park Corporation (WVTRPC) and the Robert C. Byrd Institute (RCBI) who together will establish a new industry training and education center for advanced manufacturing, a sector that is growing quickly as companies open shop in the region. Training will be offered for individuals in a six-county region of West Virginia and will include courses in advanced machining, automation, additive manufacturing, and welding. The center will develop career pathways to provide seamless transition from secondary career and technical programs to the Associate degree programs. Individuals with industrial background, including unemployed miners and veterans, will receive skills gap evaluations with credit for prior learning aligned with the program. Incumbent workers receiving training through their employer's participation in HAMI, through increased skills and certifications, will be eligible for promotions, pay raises, and other career advancements.

Department of Agriculture

Overview of announcement: USDA is announcing \$20.9 million in USDA Rural Development Investments made possible through the Electric Loan Program, Rural Energy for America Program, Community Facilities Program, and Water and Waste Disposal Program. The investments are being made in five energy communities in West Virginia, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. USDA also highlighted the total funds USDA has invested in the 25 energy communities in Kentucky, West Virginia, Ohio, and Pennsylvania since Jan 20, 2021.

Pending Language: USDA announced at least 5 awards for energy communities investing in necessary services including first responder programs, grid improvements, and other energy infrastructure, including those in West Virginia. During the listening session, USDA also highlighted recent FY22 investments in Appalachia.

USDA made over \$2.2B in investments to energy communities across the country in FY21. Moving forward, it will continue to implement its programs including the ReConnect program which received 2B\$ through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to provide broadband in rural communities.

New Announcements:

- Williamstown, WV – Rural Energy for America Program – (\$233,250 grant / \$150,000 loan) This Rural Development investment will be used to purchase and install a 500-kW solar array. Solar Energy Solutions is a West Virginia solar developer. This project will realize \$46,625 per year in savings and will replace

863,437 kWh (12 percent) per year, which is enough electricity to power 71 homes. Energy information was already counted in the companion grant.

- Norton, WV – Water and Waste Disposal Project – (\$363,000 grant) This Rural Development investment will be used towards a sewer extension consisting of a gravity collection system and grinder pump stations along State Route 151 and additional areas in Norton. Norton-Harding-Jimtown Public Service District's existing sewer system consists of conventional gravity sewer systems in Norton, Harding and surrounding communities, grinder pump stations, and a final lift station that transports sanitary sewer flows to the town of Junior's wastewater treatment plant.

Recent Announcements:

- Berkeley Springs, WV – Community Facilities – (\$800,000 loan) This Rural Development investment will be used to purchase a facility to house the Boys and Girls Club's childcare services. Its childcare program is open to any child that resides in Morgan County, WV. A portion of the new facility will also be rented to a non-profit health care provider. The Boys and Girls Club has been operating successfully out of its current Berkeley Springs facility for the past 24 years.
- Glen Dale, WV – Rural Energy for America Program – (\$71,038 grant) This Rural Development investment will be used to purchase and install a 79-kW solar array. Technocap is a manufacturing company in a rural area. This project will realize \$79,299 per year in savings and will replace 76,990 kWh (26 percent) per year, which is enough electricity to power six homes.
- Kearneysville, WV – Rural Energy for America Program – (\$119,432 grant) This Rural Development investment will be used to purchase and install a 266-kW solar array. Mountaineer Behavioral Health, PLLC is a private drug treatment center in a rural area. This project will realize \$31,778 per year in savings and will replace 261,000 kWh (10 percent) per year, which is enough electricity to power 21 homes.
- Parkersburg, WV – Rural Energy for America Program – (\$5,050 grant) This Rural Development investment will be used to assist the West Virginia Potato Chip Company, a small business that manufactures potato chips in Parkersburg, make energy efficiency improvements with the purchase and installation of lighting, water recycling equipment, and potato washing equipment. This project will realize \$31,699 per year in savings and will replace 43,527 kilowatt hours (kWh) (15percent) per year, which is enough electricity to power a portion of two homes.
- Moorefield, WV – Water and Waste Disposal Project – (\$1,460,000 loan) This Rural Development investment will be used to help Hardy County Public Service District construct a facility that will house the main office and maintenance shop. Their office and shop facility were severely damaged by flooding during a June 2018 natural disaster. As a result, the district has been forced to operate out of a

small temporary construction trailer for over two years. The site for the new facility is a 4.88-acre parcel within the Robert C. Byrd Hardy County Industrial Park located just outside the eastern city limits of the town of Moorefield. The new 6,300-square-foot facility will consist of a 2,000-square-foot office area for administrative staff and board members and a 4,300-square-foot garage area for maintenance and storage of parts, vehicles, and equipment. Since there are electric, gas, water, sewer, telephone, cable, and fiber optic utilities adjacent to the proposed site, a two-hour fire-rated wall will separate the two areas.

Department of the Interior

In February, the Department of the Interior (DOI) announced that nearly \$725 million in Fiscal Year 22 funding is available to 22 states, including West Virginia, and the Navajo Nation to create good-paying union jobs and catalyze economic opportunity by reclaiming abandoned mine lands (AML) using funds provided through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The law allocates a total of \$11.3 billion in AML funding over 15 years, which will help communities eliminate dangerous environmental conditions and pollution caused by past coal mining and allow sites to be repurposed for other economic activities as appropriate.

Previously, DOI also announced that \$1.15 billion in funding is available to states from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to create jobs cleaning up orphaned oil and gas wells across the country. This is a key initiative of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which allocated a total of \$4.7 billion to create a new federal program to address orphan wells.

Environmental Protection Agency

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has provided Coalfield Development Corporation, a West Virginia-based nonprofit, with two key grants through its Brownfields program: one for job training and one for site cleanup for the Black Diamond site in Huntington. These grants will support a program that provides West Virginians with real world experience and employment through work done directly at the site. These grants will compliment an earlier award of \$199,790 through the Brownfields Job Training program, which will allow Coalfield Development to continue building skilled workforces in West Virginia.

Additional recent Brownfields grants were awarded in several other areas of West Virginia including In the Northern Panhandle, where funds were key to the redevelopment of a former coal surface mine into the Three Springs Business Park. Since redevelopment, four new businesses have opened, creating over 350 jobs; altogether the community estimates that the number of jobs could expand to as many as 1,000.

In 2021, EPA awarded the West Virginia University Research Corporation a \$1M dollar grant to provide Brownfields technical assistance to communities throughout the mid-Atlantic which includes the states of West Virginia, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and DC.

Nuclear Energy Institute

Yesterday, the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) hosted a meeting with the IWG, nuclear generation companies, utilities, and government officials interested in growing the nuclear energy markets in West Virginia and Appalachia now that the ban on nuclear has been lifted in West Virginia. This event provided an opportunity to better understand the opportunity to support coal communities. This event builds on developments across the country such as in Kemmerer, Wyoming, where DOE is supporting the construction of an advanced nuclear reactor demonstration plant on the site of a retiring coal power plant— retaining the union workforce and providing significant economic benefits to the community. The goal of the meeting was to share information to catalyze economic development in West Virginia. Labor and the supply chain industries attended to share perspectives and opportunities for supporting nuclear energy build out in other locations with valuable energy assets and workforce skills.