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**From:** Conor Healy [PERSONAL EMAIL REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 8, 2026 1:08 PM  
**To:** erda.sm.rggiiprograms  
**Subject:** Public Comment in Support of Expanded EmPower+ Funding

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Dear NYSERDA,

As a resident of New York, I appreciate the opportunity to submit comments in response to the 2026 Draft RGGI Operating Plan Amendment presented at the December 18, 2025 RGGI stakeholder meeting. The draft 2026 RGGI Operating Plan amendment proposes a significant increase in funding for the EmPower+ program for the next three years with a new total of 240.9M. The plan estimates that 90% of EmPower+ allocations will directly benefit LMI and disadvantaged communities. **I support this laudable increase in funding for the EmPower+ program which is vital to achieving the State's GHG goals in DACs.**

Investing RGGI auction proceeds in the EmPower+ program aligns with both the newly approved 2025 State Energy Plan and the Climate Action Council Scoping Plan which stress the importance of increasing State funding to provide incentives to LMI households to transition to clean heating and make their homes more energy efficient, healthy and affordable. Nearly half of New York households have LMI levels and are in desperate need of assistance to upgrade their homes to modern energy systems such as heat pumps and heat pump water heaters.

So great is the need to provide EmPower+ incentives to LMI households that the NYS Public Service Commission recently expanded the eligibility criteria to ensure that households from across the state could take advantage of the program. Nearly 60 percent of LMI households live in one-to-four family homes, and over 40 percent of these households are renters. Reducing energy consumption through EmPower+'s electrification, energy efficiency and weatherization measures will bring down energy costs for these LMI households during times of high inflation.

Not only does the EmPower+ program help the participants of the program, it also is the backbone of the Clean Energy Sector where electrification and energy efficiency contractors make up 88% of clean energy companies. Residential building activity is a key driver of the building electrification and energy efficiency industry and State incentives, such as EmPower+, are the most used incentives among building electrification and energy efficiency contractors.

It is important to note that many of the high-paying electrification contractor jobs created through State electrification incentive programs, like the EmPower+ program, are hired from DACs. Across the State, 60,000 clean energy jobs are held by residents of DACs, representing 33% of the Statewide clean energy workforce. For DACs, which generally experience high unemployment rates, this level of workforce participation underscores the importance of supporting the proposed funding levels for the EmPower+ program.

**In conclusion, I fully support the new funding levels proposed for the EmPower+ program in the Draft 2026 RGGI Operating Plan Amendment and respectfully recommend that the NYSERDA Board of Directors approve those funding levels at the Board meeting on January 26, 2026.**

Thank you for your consideration.

**Conor Healy**  
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