
From: Adam Hobbs <adam@halcoenergy.com>
Sent: Friday, January 9, 2026 7:40 AM
To: erda.sm.rggiiprograms
Subject: Support Increased RGGI Funding for EmPower+

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Dear NYSERDA Leadership and Members of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Stakeholder Community,

On behalf of **Halco Home Solutions**, I am writing to express strong support for NYSERDA's Draft 2026 RGGI Operating Plan and its continued investment in residential energy efficiency and building electrification programs, particularly EmPower+, which plays a critical role in advancing New York State's climate, affordability, and equity goals.

EmPower+ is a cornerstone program for supporting low- and moderate-income (LMI) New Yorkers, helping households reduce energy consumption, lower utility bills, and improve comfort and health in their primary residences. The program's focus on one-to-four family homes is especially important, as nearly 60 percent of LMI households live in these housing types, and more than 40 percent of them are renters. With approximately half of all New York households classified as low-to-moderate income, the scale and accessibility of EmPower+ are essential.

Through EmPower+, eligible households receive no-cost comprehensive home energy assessments that identify inefficiencies and provide customized plans to reduce energy use. The program also delivers no-cost direct-install measures and provides funding to offset the cost of deeper energy efficiency and electrification upgrades, including air sealing, insulation, heat pumps, heat pump water heaters, and necessary electrical service and wiring upgrades. These measures directly reduce energy burden for LMI households by lowering energy consumption through proven efficiency and weatherization strategies.

The Draft 2026 RGGI Operating Plan appropriately recognizes the importance of sustaining and expanding this work. EmPower+ is funded through a diverse and complementary set of sources—including RGGI proceeds, utility ratepayer collections, the Inflation Reduction Act, and the State Budget—demonstrating the value of RGGI as a flexible and effective funding mechanism that leverages additional state and federal investments.

The Draft Plan is also well aligned with the 2025 New York State Energy Plan, which identifies electrification and energy efficiency as core strategies for reducing energy use in residential buildings, maintaining occupant comfort, and supporting electric grid reliability. The Energy Plan further recommends that the State continue offering financial incentives to reduce upfront costs and motivate energy upgrades in existing buildings, with a clear priority on improving energy performance and housing quality for LMI households and residents of Disadvantaged Communities.

As a New York–based home performance and clean energy contractor, **Halco Home Solutions** sees firsthand how programs like EmPower+ reduce energy costs for LMI households while improving safety, comfort, and housing quality. Continued RGGI investment enables contractors to deliver these benefits at scale while ensuring consistent access for households that would otherwise be unable to afford critical energy upgrades.

In addition to delivering direct benefits to households, EmPower+ and related RGGI-supported programs are driving job creation and economic opportunity across the State. Building electrification and energy efficiency added the greatest number of clean energy jobs in 2024, growing by more than 5,400 jobs at a rate of 4 percent. Employers in this sector expect continued growth over the next three years, with clean energy workers earning higher wages and benefits than the broader labor market. The energy efficiency contractor sector represents approximately 88 percent of clean energy establishments statewide, and residential building activity remains the primary driver of this industry. Notably, state incentives such as EmPower+ are the most commonly used incentives among building electrification and energy efficiency contractors, underscoring their importance to workforce stability and growth.

The Draft 2026 RGGI Operating Plan also supports equitable economic development. Disadvantaged Communities account for nearly 60,000 clean energy jobs—approximately one-third of the statewide total—demonstrating that investments in efficiency and electrification can advance both climate and equity outcomes. This approach aligns with the Climate Action Council’s Scoping Plan, which identified scaling up state incentives for building electrification and prioritizing LMI households and Disadvantaged Communities as a key strategy for achieving New York’s climate targets.

For these reasons, **Halco Home Solutions** strongly supports NYSERDA’s Draft 2026 RGGI Operating Plan and its continued emphasis on EmPower+ and residential energy efficiency and electrification investments. Sustained RGGI funding is essential to reducing energy burdens, strengthening the clean energy workforce, improving housing quality, and advancing New York State’s climate and equity commitments.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and for NYSERDA’s continued leadership in delivering programs that provide meaningful benefits to New York residents and communities.

Sincerely,
Halco Home Solutions

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