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## **DEP Celebrates \$30 Million Invested in Low-Interest Loans for High-Impact Commercial Energy Efficiency Projects**

**Harrisburg, PA** – The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced today that the Green Energy Loan Fund has reached a milestone of \$30 million invested in low-interest loans for high-impact energy efficiency projects on commercial properties.

DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell made the announcement at an event with leaders from the Leon H. Sullivan Charitable Trust and the Reinvestment Fund at the Leon H. Sullivan Human Services Center in Philadelphia.

“Energy efficiency drives positive impacts across our lives,” said Secretary McDonnell. “Every time a company or organization installs an energy-efficient heating, cooling, or lighting system, it’s another step for Pennsylvania and the nation toward independence from fossil fuels. It creates good-paying jobs in energy efficiency system manufacturing and installation. It lowers operating expenses, allowing an entity to focus more resources on its mission. It makes air quality healthier in the community. And it helps lower greenhouse gas emissions to slow climate change and its negative effects.”

The [Green Energy Loan Fund](#) prioritizes local community development efforts and seeks to support projects in Environmental Justice areas. Nearly 30 percent of funded projects have been in buildings owned or controlled by persons of color or with low income, and more than half have been located in low-income census tracts. Local governments, businesses, school districts, hospitals, and nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply.

The fund helps commercial building owners take energy efficiency projects above and beyond building code standards, which many other lenders are less willing to do. New equipment must reduce a building’s energy use at least 25 percent, and whole-building projects must reduce energy use more than 10 percent over current building energy code.

The Green Energy Loan Fund has supported a range of cutting-edge energy efficiency approaches in everything from new buildings and gut rehabs to installation of HVAC systems, geexchange systems, boilers, chillers, windows, white roofing, insulation, smart elevator motors, LED lighting and controls, water heaters, water conservation plumbing, and an ultra efficient laboratory exhaust system.

The [Leon H. Sullivan Trust](#) received \$742,410 in low-interest financing to install a state-of-the-art HVAC system, including boilers and chillers, and upgrade lighting at the Sullivan Center. These measures will cut electricity use by over 51,000 kilowatt hours annually.

“The Leon H. Sullivan Human Services Center serves hundreds of Philadelphians every day, and the services have become even more crucial during the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Mable Welborn, Board Chair of the Leon H. Sullivan Charitable Trust. “This program allows us to operate a more energy efficient Center for the providers of services and the communities we serve. These improvements will allow us to continue making affordable and accessible office space available to a large number of services providers, which is the reason this Center was built by Dr. Sullivan in 1978. That has been and continues to be the mission of the Trust because the community needs it.”

DEP and Reinvestment Fund launched the Green Energy Loan Fund in 2009 with \$12 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Since then, the fund has financed 18 projects statewide, totaling \$30 million in loans supporting improvements to 2.3 million square feet of building space.

“The Green Energy Loan Fund is more than just funding. It’s a model that not only improves environmental sustainability, but is also itself sustainable,” said Nancy Wagner Hislip, Reinvestment Fund’s Chief Investment Officer. “Since its founding, the program has suffered no losses, and has in fact revolved its capital more than once to continue to drive energy savings—all at no additional cost to taxpayers.”

With 15 projects completed so far, the fund has supported carbon dioxide emissions reduction of 110,000 tons over the life of these projects, equal to taking 22,000 cars off the road for a year.

Fifteen projects are in the Philadelphia region, including projects at Drexel University; Esperanza College; 990 Spring Garden, a retail/maker/office space; the Tower Place and Coventry House residential buildings, and others. Three projects are in Pittsburgh, Punxsutawney, and Bethlehem. [See project stories.](#)

The Green Energy Loan Fund is always open for applications. As money returns to the fund through loan payments, new projects are considered.

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