

Murphy Helps Secure Federal Energy Efficiency Grant for Cheshire and Other Communities

With the support of Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5), the federal Department of Energy (DOE) has announced it is awarding a \$4.1 million grant to the "Neighbor to Neighbor Energy Challenge," a consortium of 14 Connecticut communities and nine project partners, which includes Cheshire.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - With the support of Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5), the federal Department of Energy (DOE) has announced it is awarding a \$4.1 million grant to the "Neighbor to Neighbor Energy Challenge," a consortium of 14 Connecticut communities and nine project partners, which includes Cheshire.

"I'm so passionate about this particular project because it puts the tools necessary to cut energy use directly into the hands of consumers. With this grant, energy experts will be able to help people make a real difference in their energy bills and reduce the affects of their energy consumption on the environment," said Murphy.

The grant, one of just 20 made across the country, was awarded by the DOE through a competitive process under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Murphy led an effort to secure support from the entire Connecticut Congressional delegation, which sent a letter to DOE in May 2010.

In Connecticut, the project involves a consortium of 14 rural, suburban, and low-income towns across all 5 Congressional districts in the state. The program builds upon the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund's highly successful Clean Energy Communities Program and aims to encourage residents to save energy and utilize cleaner energy sources. Specifically, it seeks to engage and support 10 percent of households in participating communities to set distinct, measurable goals of 20 percent energy savings and clean energy usage.

Communities will create innovative online platforms with a personal energy advisor and leader boards, an on-the-ground clean energy community corps, financing to assist homeowners with energy efficiency measures and clean energy installations, performance-based incentives to reward communities for meeting targets, and a monitoring program.

The DOE dedicated \$60 million nationwide to help local governments, nonprofit groups and quasi-public agencies promote energy efficiency and renewable energy programs. The DOE grant funds innovative approaches in energy efficiency and clean energy that achieve significant long-term benefits for the community and act as a model for future public and private investment in energy efficiency efforts.

"Electricity rates in Connecticut are the highest in the continental United States. As a result, we understand better than most the need to find savings and to develop alternative energy sources. This project will put us on the path to sustainable energy usage," said Murphy.

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