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Nonprofit Partnership Harnesses Energy Efficiency and Solar Power to Drive Energy Savings for Low Income Multifamily Properties

Projects expected to maximize economic and environmental benefits by reducing energy use through efficiency measures while increasing the percentage of buildings' energy needs supplied by renewables

New York, NY, March 21, 2017 – Association for Energy Affordability, Inc. (AEA) and GRID Alternatives Tri-State, Inc. today announced the launch of the Energy Efficiency and Solar Partnership (EESP).

The nonprofit partnership will combine AEA's leading edge expertise in energy efficiency with GRID Alternatives' successful low-income solar model to bring low-cost energy efficiency and solar power to owners and managers of affordable multifamily housing, who provide critical housing and services to low-income households in the New York region.

Up-front costs, lack of access to capital, and complex financing requirements remain significant barriers for this sector to take full advantage of available programs and technologies. The Energy Efficiency and Solar Partnership will leverage both philanthropic funding and energy efficiency programs funded by government or local utilities to address those barriers by covering or substantially reducing the costs to owners of technical assessments, design services, and installation of systems. Projects will include both job training and energy efficiency education opportunities for residents and other community members.

"Upgrading or replacing inefficient or deteriorated building systems to optimize their performance is a critical first step that increases occupant comfort and reduces the energy and water consumption of the building and their associated costs. This paves the way to design a solar energy system that can now supply a larger share of the building's energy requirements and further reduce both owner and resident utility bills," said David Hepinstall, executive director of AEA.

"By offering both solar and energy efficiency we will serve our shared mission of reducing the burden for low-income New Yorkers who pay the largest portion of their income in energy costs. The comprehensive whole-building approach we are pioneering helps to address the integration issues which can be encountered when adding solar technology to older buildings. Energy efficiency plus solar is truly a better approach than either measure alone," said Peter Mandelstam, Executive Director of GRID Alternatives Tri-State Inc.

Through the Energy Efficiency and Solar Partnership, the partners plan to develop and install a number of multifamily affordable solar projects in 2017 and facilitate dozens more through technical assistance and coordination with the Weatherization Assistance Program. The EESP is eligible to apply for funding available through NYSERDA's statewide NY-Sun program in support of solar energy system installations. Under Governor Cuomo's leadership, NY-Sun aims to add more than 3,000 megawatts (3 gigawatts) of

installed solar capacity in the State by 2023, or enough solar energy to power 400,000 homes.

"The EESP is an exciting initiative that offers the potential for developing a model for the successful integration of energy efficiency and solar PV to lower energy costs and enhance comfort for residents of affordable multifamily housing," said John B. Rhodes, President and CEO, New York State Energy Research and Development Authority. "Partnerships like this are critical to achieving Governor Cuomo's Reforming the Energy Vision, for energy that is cleaner, more affordable, and more resilient for all New Yorkers."

"The collaboration between AEA and GRID Alternatives Tri-State embodies OneNYC's spirit of inclusive climate action," said Mark Chambers, Director of the NYC Mayor's Office of Sustainability. "By pairing energy efficiency services with solar energy products, this effort will help keep housing costs more affordable while enhancing energy independence and accelerating a whole-city transition toward Mayor de Blasio's ambitious goal for reducing greenhouse gas emissions 80% by 2050."

Owners and managers of affordable housing interested in energy efficiency or solar technical assistance or both can visit www.aea.us.org or <http://www.gridalternatives.org/multifamily> to get started.

About the Partners

Association for Energy Affordability, Inc. (AEA) advances energy efficient housing to foster and maintain affordable, healthy housing and communities. With offices in New York, California and Illinois, AEA implements government and utility energy efficiency programs, conducts energy audits and related technical services and directly installs energy efficiency measures. Specializing in multifamily and affordable housing, AEA also offers energy efficiency and passive house consulting for existing buildings and new construction, and certification training that helps professionals, contractors and building operators meet the highest standards for deep energy savings. AEA member agencies provide Weatherization services for low-income households throughout downstate New York.

GRID Alternatives Tri-State is an affiliate of GRID Alternatives, America's largest nonprofit solar installer, bringing clean energy and job training to underserved communities. GRID has installed more than 8,100 solar electric systems for affordable single- and multifamily homes to date, representing over \$234 million in lifetime savings and over 643,000 pounds of greenhouse gas emissions prevented, and trained over 30,000 people. GRID Alternatives Tri-State serves New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut.

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