

**Maine Climate Council Equity Subcommittee  
Draft Recommendations - for Deliberative Purposes  
Buildings + Energy Efficiency  
Version 8-26-2021**

*Please note:*

This document contains draft recommendations for deliberation by the equity subcommittee members.

Edits and revisions will be discussed during upcoming working sessions of the subcommittee, the schedules of which will be posted on the [subcommittee website](#) in early September.

Public comment on these draft recommendations will be accepted during upcoming subcommittee meetings on September 23 and October 21, or anytime through this [online form](#).

All upcoming meetings and meeting materials can be found [here](#).

**DRAFT DOCUMENT - DELIBERATIVE VERSION**

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MCC Equity Subcommittee

DRAFT Buildings + Energy Efficiency Recommendations

<b>Original Source of Proposed Recommendation (Direct Comments/Notes from Equity Subcommittee Minutes)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Proposed Recommendations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide comprehensive services to each home, not just single weatherization fixes<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Measure wellbeing of the household on a “crisis to thrive” scale, utilizing a shared database across all social service providers</li><li>• Track household access to supportive services over time; test the assumption, as earned income in a household increases, access to supportive services decreases – proving intersectional approach is an efficient way to enable families to succeed.</li><li>• Can the state incentivize and model best practices for coordinated service provisions?</li><li>• Can we bring together and learn from various social services data sources, from the “Whole Family” approach</li><li>• Enhance info sharing and data sharing across service agencies, and especially state agencies</li></ul></li></ul>	<p>The State should establish a working group to further coordinate the provision of comprehensive social services to every vulnerable household in Maine, including weatherization services. The working group should consider the adoption of a comprehensive “Crisis to Thrive” scale and the adoption of a centralized database to enable coordinated provision of services.</p> <p>Example:</p> <p><a href="#">Garrett County Community Action Committee, Inc (GCCAC)</a> provides services based on the areas covered by their Crisis to Thriving Scale. Families work with GCCAC staff to assess their needs and goals. GCCAC captures each family’s information in a central database and shares it with partner organizations that families receive services from.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Decrease burdensome paperwork, and rephrase questions to avoid perception of “avoidance of fraud” – perhaps enable “community navigators” for enrollment of clients</li></ul>	<p>The state should develop a one-stop intake process for the coordinated provision of social services.</p>
<p>Policies and programs should reduce energy burden for vulnerable populations</p>	<p>The Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and the Future in collaboration with the Maine Public Utilities Commission and the Office of the Public</p>

<sup>1</sup> Text in this column is from Equity Subcommittee meeting minutes.

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	Advocate should conduct a comprehensive assessment of energy burden across Maine. This assessment should identify actions which reduce energy burden for the most vulnerable Mainers, both through the revision of existing programs and in the adoption of new programs and proposals.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Modify metrics for program success across programs to include meeting the needs of prioritized populations first<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Who are the communities of highest concern - are there subgroups within low income populations?</li><li>○ Particular communities we care about preserving?</li><li>○ Limited resources, how do we focus and prioritize these resources?</li><li>○ Are there ways to prioritize resources further to try out some new strategies and to make impacts in those communities who wouldn't get there for years to come?</li></ul></li></ul>	In close partnership with MHSA, CAP agencies, EMT, and others, the state should conduct an assessment to identify those communities with the poorest, least healthy, least efficient housing stock in the state. This assessment should identify actions which prioritize the allocation of targeted resources to building upgrades and weatherization services for those communities/housing structures determined most vulnerable.
Work towards a full expenditure of HEAP funds	The state should assess opportunities for improvement in the administration of HEAP funding, including barriers to total expenditure of funds each year.
Address lack of trained contractors/installers and availability/access for all regions of the state – gap analysis, and then targeted education/training/outreach/recruitment <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Rural communities don't have access to code enforcement entities.</li><li>○ Important consumer protection role to play because homes</li></ul>	The state should collaborate with municipalities across the state to provide access to shared services for building code development and enforcement, in partnership with access to shared education for builders, architects, and local officials provided by Efficiency Maine Trust and others.

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<p>generally stick around for decades if not 100 years; protection for current and future generations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Address resistance to increasing building codes in rural areas: perception amongst municipal officials is greater expense, so target education to address this perception</li><li>○ Training is necessary for code compliance</li></ul>	
<p>Certification of individuals who can do energy assessments is onerous - is there a simpler way to credential energy auditors? Or air seal testing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Is there an intermediate certification?</li></ul>	<p>The state, in partnership with CTEs, community colleges, and other training partners, should conduct a statewide study of workforce availability to meet current and projected needs for energy assessments, audits, and weatherization technicians. This study should assess any projected workforce shortages across the state, and should recommend training programs and other mechanisms designed to increase access to well-paying jobs in these fields for historically disadvantaged or underemployed Mainers.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Advance design and construction of new buildings: prioritize multifamily/low income housing to put people into newer buildings when the cost of renovating is too high for old structures.</li></ul>	<p>Maine Housing should adopt the Enterprise Green Community or comparable standard for sustainable affordable housing, and should immediately prioritize funding spent on new and renovated housing to meet this standard.</p> <p>Maine Housing should coordinate with other state agencies and partners who provide access to funding for clean energy technologies and services, in order to adopt those technologies and services in affordable housing developments and to market those opportunities within their housed communities.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Intentionally increase access to programs in languages other than English</li><li>● Bring folks with lived experiences to the table to codesign programs</li><li>● Utilize existing social networks to spread information when reaching rural areas</li></ul>	<p><a href="#">As per the requirements in LD 1682</a>, the Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and the Future shall work with agencies to develop guidelines for equity across all agencies, including the adoption of guidelines to improve equitable processes. These guidelines might include increasing access to all programs in languages other than English, including representative participants in program co-design processes, and utilizing existing social networks to engage communities in state decision making.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Funding/Incentives<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Municipalities should get funding to encourage folks to choose cleaner sources, to reimburse landlord or part of that cost if they actively try to find renewable energy or clean wood resources.</li><li>● Align incentives for weatherization activities to the bill payer – who may be the landlord, not the client</li><li>● Work with landlords to address unique barriers, provide services to renters</li><li>● Need additional funding in rural and low income communities for greener buildings, and energy efficiency is important to keep people in their homes</li></ul></li></ul>	<p>The state, working with EMT, MaineHousing, and others, should consider developing pilot programs and incentives targeted at the adoption of clean building and heating solutions by landlords, particularly in rural and low income communities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Collect data on how many homes need weatherization, how many receive fuel assistance – how do we identify people who need weatherization services but can’t access them?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● There are many more homes that need</li></ul></li></ul>	<p>The state, working together with EMT, OPA and MSHA, should publish a baseline assessment of the number of homes which need weatherization assistance, and should develop a plan to ensure that all households which receive heating and other energy bill assistance have access to weatherization and other energy demand reduction services.</p>

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<p>weatherization than are getting served</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There are 40K households on LIHEAP, Maine housing's budget to fund weatherization and the CAPs (and LIHEAP weatherization funds) can do up to 1000 homes per year, but usually only do a few hundred - with no customer contribution</li></ul>	
<p>Further research on gentrification</p>	<p>GEO should conduct a study on the potential for gentrification and associated price impacts when improving houses, and policy options for managing this and other unintended consequences</p>