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Testimony before the
Subcommittee on Green Jobs and the New Economy
of the United States Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
Field Hearing Entitled
“An Efficient Way to Grow Jobs: Energy Upgrades that Save Families and Businesses
Money, Reduce Pollution, and Create Good Jobs.”
Portland, Oregon

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for your invitation to participate in today’s field hearing. My name is Casey Barnard and I am Project Director for Emerald Cities Portland, a coalition focused on greening our city, building our community and strengthening democracy. We are part of the national Emerald Cities Collaborative, a network of organizations working together to retrofit building stock, create high wage jobs, and revitalize local economies.

Emerald Cities’ work across the country supports President Obama's vision for an energy secure future and Climate Action Plan in establishing a new goal for energy efficiency standards, reducing barriers to investment in energy efficiency and expanding the President's Better Building Challenge. The Obama Administration believes the federal government should lead by example, and has already directed federal agencies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by more than 15 percent - the equivalent of permanently taking 1.5 million cars off the road. In a second term, the President has raised the bar to 20% by 2020.

Today, I would like to speak with you about the Edith Green-Wendell Wyatt Federal Building Modernization Project in Portland, Oregon. Emerald Cities Portland spearheaded the Edith Green Workforce Mapping Project, intended to research construction workforce demographics, union apprenticeship and community training programs, and activities to recruit and retain a diverse workforce. The Edith Green project involved the renovation of the General Services Administration’s (GSA’s) Edith Green building to create a high performance green building consistent with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) intention. The project was completed in May 2013 and is a great example of leveraging strong federal investment to create lasting environmental and financial savings for the government, as well as good green jobs for community members. With the Edith Green project, the federal government is leading by example and having a real impact on communities.

The 536,260 Square Foot Edith Green project in Portland, Oregon will exceed the aggressive energy and water conservation goals of the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA), providing an office building that will outperform, in energy and water efficiency, all but the top few percent of office buildings in the country. The GSA is seeking LEED Platinum Certification for the Edith Green Building. The Edith Green building is projected to achieve 55% energy savings over the original building. The building will also achieve water conservation, with a projected potable water use reduction of 60% compared to baseline. The project also resulted in improved indoor air quality and work environment for federal employees.

Among numerous other measures, the integrated project team achieved energy and cost savings through these efficiency measures:

- Upgrade of mechanical, HVAC and plumbing systems.
- Replacement of concrete panels with a high performance glass curtain wall that made the building lighter, reducing seismic costs, while providing additional leasable space at the perimeter.
- External shading devices on building façades to minimize the solar heat gain during summer and respond to sun conditions.
- Addition of a 22,000 SF canopy roof to the building's roof for photo voltaic panels (PV) and water collection. PV panels are expected to produce 180kW of power.
- Collection and reuse of rainwater (165,000 gallon cistern).
- Energy efficient electric lighting systems with advanced controls to reduce lighting energy usage by 40% compared to Oregon Code.
- Modernized elevators incorporating energy saving features such as destination dispatch and regenerative energy generation technology.

Through the modernization, GSA was able to increase the usable square footage of the building by about 31,000 square feet, and increase its rentable area while reducing costs and environmental footprint. Now that the modernization is complete, 14 Federal agencies (occupying approximately 290,012 rentable square feet) will be moving from leased space throughout the City into Edith Green this year. The annual lease cost of this space was approximately \$10,100,000, and the move from commercial leases to federally owned space will save the government an estimated \$8,300,000. Federal agencies will see an estimated \$4,200,000 annual reduction in their rent.

The Edith Green project was funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the final construction cost was \$139,000,000. The Edith Green project alone employed more than 90 companies – totaling approximately 650,567 on site labor hours (not including material supplier and off site manufacturing). There were 764 total workers, and these jobs created opportunities for new workers through utilization of apprentices, and for historically underserved workers. You will hear later from an IBEW electrical apprentice who had the opportunity to work on the Edith Green project. The Edith Green workforce included:

- 19.8% Apprentice Participation
- 17% Minority Craft Worker Participation
- 7.7% Female Craft Worker Participation

Approximately \$26 million in subcontracts were contracted to disadvantaged business enterprises and small businesses:

- 24% Minority Owned Businesses
- 12% Women Owned Businesses
- 17% Small Businesses

The GSA also piloted the use of a Project Labor Agreement (PLA) on the Edith Green project, consistent with President Obama's Executive Order 13502 for the Use of PLAs for Federal Construction Projects (issued in February 2009). Project Labor Agreements are pre-hire

collective bargaining agreements with one or more labor organizations that establish the terms and conditions of employment for a specific construction project.

PLAs are intended to provide structure and stability, and promote the efficient completion of large-scale construction projects by reducing labor costs, resolving disputes, and ensuring coordination among various employers and labor organizations. This proved to be more than accurate on the Edith Green project. The PLA established fair working conditions and family supporting wages, as well as an ongoing Labor-Management Oversight Committee, which included regional construction labor unions and met regularly to forecast workforce needs, review workforce and subcontracting activities, make adjustments and develop creative solutions. By all counts, the PLA created open lines of communication and allowed the project to be completed on time and on budget.

The Edith Green PLA also established a community fund to support research and education activities and the Workforce Mapping Project, which Emerald Cities Portland spearheaded along with CAWS, Constructing Hope, Oregon Tradeswomen, Portland Community College, Portland YouthBuilders and the Urban League of Portland. The project involved research into existing construction workforce demographics, union apprenticeship programs and activities to recruit and retain a diverse workforce. This Workforce Mapping Project included interviews with regional construction trade unions, collaboration between community based organizations and unions, a construction career guide for use in high schools, and assessments of demographic data and barriers to success for women and people of color in the construction trades. The project highlighted the need for early community engagement by owners and contractors in large construction projects.

The Edith Green project successfully leveraged strong federal investment to create lasting environmental and financial savings, as well as good jobs for community members. I would like to close by making a point about green jobs in general. These “green jobs” are closely tied to the traditional construction trades and related union infrastructure – allowing workers to use their existing skills and certifications, supplement their knowledge with green techniques and technologies, and continue to build strong careers that will be relevant for many decades to come.

I want to thank US Senator Merkley and the Committee for the opportunity to testify and tell the Edith Green story. The Emerald Cities Collaborative welcomes the opportunity to work with you and your colleagues in the Congress to ensure greener, more sustainable and resilient communities.

PROGRAM ENERGY PERFORMANCE GOAL

