



Legislation Text

File #: 09-1064, **Version:** 1

Human Services Department recommending conceptual approval of an amendment to the El Dorado County DOE ARRA Local Plan for provision of U.S. Department of Energy American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (DOE ARRA) Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) services during the term June 30, 2009 through September 30, 2011, proposing to conduct all home assessment and weatherization services in-house rather than contracting out for them; and authorizing the Director of Human Services to sign and submit said amendment to the California Department of Community Services and Development by the deadline, currently August 31, 2009.

FUNDING: DOE ARRA Funds.

Fiscal Impact/Change to Net County Cost: No change. DOE ARRA funding is included in the FY 09-10 County Budget Request with no match requirement. There is no cost other than staff preparation time associated with submittal of the required DOE ARRA Local Plan Amendment.

Background:

The California Department of Community Services and Development (CSD) is responsible for administering U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) ARRA funding in California. Due to requirements associated with Federal Stimulus funding that are passed along by the Federal Government to the State of California, then to the local jurisdictions, time has been and continues to be critical in accessing and preparing to expend available American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) revenues. As the County Department designated to administer Community Action Agency programs, including the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP) and Department of Energy Weatherization Assistance programs, on behalf of El Dorado County to benefit residents of El Dorado and Alpine counties, it was the responsibility of Human Services to apply for and administer DOE ARRA funding.

Reason for Recommendation:

In order to access available DOE ARRA Weatherization Assistance Program funds, Human Services (DHS) submitted a Local Plan to CSD on April 9, 2009 outlining how El Dorado County would use DOE ARRA funding during the anticipated term of July 1, 2009 through September 30, 2011. Because CSD initially maintained that the DOE ARRA funding required adherence to Davis-Bacon prevailing wage requirements for field workers, and in accordance with ARRA intent, the Local Plan proposed to weatherize approximately 207 homes, creating approximately 32 local jobs during contract term, with DHS staff performing outreach, intake and eligibility determination and referring eligible applicants to contracted vendor(s) to conduct home assessments and install appropriate weatherization measures.

On June 9, 2009, the Board adopted Resolution 117-2009 authorizing the Director of Human Services to execute Contract 09C-1808 with the California Department of Community Services and Development (CSD), contingent upon County Counsel and Risk Management approval, for the stated amount and term as well as amendments thereto up to the projected full allocation of \$1,550,062. At

that time the Board was informed that DHS could amend the Local Plan to conduct activities in-house should an exemption to prevailing wage requirements be confirmed.

DOE ARRA Grant Contract 09C-1808 was issued to El Dorado County on June 4, 2009, for the term June 30, 2009 through September 30, 2011, in an initial amount of \$93,518 allocated for ramp up activities, including outreach, hiring and training of staff and purchase of equipment. This contract was executed by the DHS Director on June 15, 2009 and by CSD on June 23, 2009. While CSD has received notice that the next round of funding will be allocated to California by the U.S. DOE, no funds may be allocated to local agencies for production activities until the State Legislature authorizes CSD to release these funds, probably in September or October of 2009.

In accordance with a directive from CSD, DHS must submit an amendment to the DOE ARRA Local Plan by August 31, 2009. Since confirmation of exemption for governmental agencies from Davis-Bacon requirements was received on June 25, 2009, DHS has moved forward with implementing DOE ARRA in-house, as this option is much more viable and cost effective and will allow for the weatherization of approximately fifty additional homes while avoiding potential program oversight, tracking and monitoring issues as well as union concerns associated with contracting out.

DHS is recommending Board conceptual approval to ensure timely submittal of the required amendment because CSD has not yet issued the instructions or format for preparation of said amendment, which will allow minimal time for preparation and insufficient time to bring the completed document forth for Board approval prior to submittal to CSD. Once issuance occurs, DHS will prepare and submit the required DOE ARRA Local Plan amendment outlining El Dorado County's plan to hire staff to perform direct weatherization home assessment and measure installation services, creating or retaining approximately 20 local jobs during the term of the contract and weatherizing approximately 260 homes.

Use of the DOE ARRA funding, especially with provision of services in-house, will enable El Dorado County to significantly expand Weatherization Assistance Program services that promote energy conservation and generate long-range savings for low-income households while strengthening housing stock.

Action to be taken following Board approval:

Human Services to prepare and submit a DOE ARRA Local Plan Amendment to CSD by the deadline, currently August 31, 2009.

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Concurrences: County Counsel, Risk Management and Human Resources approved the Resolution and Contract prior to execution.