Better Together: Linking and Leveraging Energy Programs for Low-Income Households

November 19, 2015
Creating a Nonprofit Hub for Energy Assistance

• Overview of Energy Outreach Colorado
• Historical Perspective
• Current EOC Program Matrix
• Energy Efficiency and Behavior Change Programs
• Advocacy Efforts
• How other states can work towards this model
Energy Outreach Colorado Overview

• Mission – To ensure all Colorado households have access to home energy
• Since 1989, distributed more than $250 Million
• Programs - bill payment assistance, energy efficiency, behavior change, and advocacy
• Strong utility partnerships across the state
• Staff serve on Governor appointed energy committees
• Actively intervene at the Colorado Public Utilities Commission
• Monitor many coalitions – state and national
  – National Energy and Utility Affordability Coalition
EOC’s History

- Created in 1989 by Governor’s Executive Order
- Existing utility programs were transferred to the newly created organization
- EOC is a 501(c)(3) with independent Board of Directors
- Funding came from:
  - Traditional utility bill insert programs
  - Unclaimed utility deposits and refunds (legislated)
  - Direct mail programs, corporations, and foundations
  - Fines and utility settlements (regulatory)
Program Evolution

• Initially funding supplemented state LIHEAP
• LIHEAP (heating) operates in Colorado November – April and is county administered by DHS
• Recognized need for year-round assistance for all energy needs, including electricity
• EOC developed year-round assistance program for all fuel types through partnership with 125+ community based assistance agencies statewide (like CAPs)
• Require clients apply for LIHEAP first when open
Current Energy Assistance Program

• When client isn’t eligible for LIHEAP, EOC assistance can be provided seamlessly to the client
• Tracked in centralized database to ensure client receives assistance only once a year
• Vendor payments to utilities
• Partnership with school districts, United Way’s 211, and counties is expanding participation
• EOC also initiated Percent of Income Program in Colorado – all IOUs participate
Expansion to Energy Efficiency

• EOC developed Nonprofit Energy Efficiency Program when cash assistance partners struggled paying bills in 2005-06

• After DSM was mandated, worked at legislature and PUC to ensure that low-income households had restricted DSM funding

• Secured contract with State Energy Office to deliver statewide multi-family weatherization program

• Secured Crisis Intervention Program (furnace repair and replacement) contract with State LIHEAP and transformed service delivery
# EOC Program Funding Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill Payment Assistance</th>
<th>Energy Efficiency Projects</th>
<th>Efficiency Education &amp; Advocacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Utility Bill Check off Programs</td>
<td>Utility Demand Side Management (DSM) Contracts – (legislation and regulatory)</td>
<td>Individuals and Corporate donors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- legislation for IOUs</td>
<td>- (DSM) Contracts – (legislation and regulatory) IOUs, REAs, MUNIs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- REAs and MUNIs participate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Late Fees – Xcel Energy (regulatory)</td>
<td>State Weatherization Funds – Multi-family buildings</td>
<td>Contracts with Affordable Housing Developers and Housing Authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severance Tax Operational Funds</td>
<td>Crisis Intervention Program – LIHEAP Funds – furnace repair and replacement</td>
<td>Utilities are beginning to fund resident engagement programs - Pilot with Xcel Energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- State funds (legislation)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Donors</td>
<td>City and County of Denver – franchise fee negotiation</td>
<td>Facility manager trainings for Multi-family and Nonprofits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 20,000 annual donors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporations and Foundations</td>
<td>Oil and gas producers; Individuals and Corporate donors</td>
<td>Lobbyist and regulatory attorney on contract; pro bono attorney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporations and Foundations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10 Million per year</td>
<td>$10-12 Million per year</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EOC Advocacy Efforts

• Regulatory Activities
  – Intervention in Rate Cases
  – Intervention in Utility Mergers/Acquisitions
  – Participation in Rule Making
  – Initiated Percent of Income Payment Program
  – Fines from utility noncompliance

• Legislative Activities
  – Unclaimed Utility Deposits and Refunds
  – Natural Gas Deregulation (not active in CO but EOC could benefit)
  – Low Income Energy Assistance Act – voluntary check off program on utility bills
  – Low-income program requirement in DSM programs
  – Severance tax funding for low-income programs
Key Success Factors

• Being active in Advocacy – ensuring low-income issues are considered
• Leveraging Funds – public, utility and other private funds
• Understanding Funders’ Goals
  • Utilities = Energy Savings
  • State and DOE = Production; quality of measures installed
  • Cities and Corporations = Carbon Reduction
• Energy Efficiency Subcontractor Model; able to ramp up and down quickly
• Producing and Tracking Results and Good Reporting
  • Database – tracking units, kW, kWh, Dths, carbon
  • Outcomes – Measurement and Verification
  • Continuous Process Improvement
• Keeping the clients needs first
  • Building Owners and Residents
  • Advocacy on their behalf – no one else considered their needs
What other states can do

- Ensure funding for low-income programs – special consideration
- Advocate at Legislature and Public Utilities Commission
- Establish strong partnerships with utilities, State Energy Office and LIHEAP
- Statewide Participation – no community left out
- Active Stakeholder Participation – include all communities – seniors, disabled, communities of color, rural, resort
- Focus on improving existing program infrastructure
- Ensure maximum consumer protections
- Focus on health and safety benefits in addition to energy savings
Jennifer Gremmert
Deputy Director
jgremmert@EnergyOutreach.org
303-226-5052
www.EnergyOutreach.org