

Abstract

Title: Preparing the Frontlines for a Climate Future through Holistic Weatherization

Applicant: Houston Advanced Research Center

PI: Gavin Dillingham, PhD, Vice President Research, Energy and Air

Major participants:

- South-central Partnership for Energy Efficiency as a Resource (SPEER);
- Connective;
- Frontier Energy;
- Coalition for Environmental, Equity and Resilience (CEER);
- Texas Energy Poverty Research Institute (TEPRI).

Objective: To deploy an innovative place-based deep retrofit weatherization program emphasizing a co-production, community-based strategy in Texas' underserved communities. To significantly increase eligibility and uptake of underserved residents to fully participate in the WAP, thereby reducing energy burden and making the residence climate ready. This effort will be tested in Harris County, TX, and scaled to Travis County to assess scalability.

Project Description: A three-year project is proposed. *Year one* will include setting up the program, including the co-production model, community navigator model, climate-proof training model, deep energy retrofit technology options, and online coordination platform. *Year two* will largely focus on the implementation of this program, utilizing the models/tools developed in year 1. An evaluation of progress will be conducted at the completion of year two and used to update and improve model and approach. For *Year 3*, proposed changes will be implemented, and work will continue in Harris County, but also the program will be launched in Travis County.

Project Impact: In Harris County, an average of 350 homes are weatherized per year and 80 homes in Travis County. Through this program we look to increase the number of homes weatherized per year by 30 percent, largely by moving homes more efficiently through home rebuild programs and by increasing awareness in the community, as well as helping owners navigate title ownership and tax assessment concerns. The project will include a community navigator program and co-production model that will actively employ and engage underserved community members to identify and develop solutions to work through weatherization barriers.