Supporting State and Local Governments with Their Energy Priorities

P&TA supports the energy priorities of state and local governments to save taxpayer dollars, make full use of domestic energy resources, boost local economic development and job creation, cut energy waste, improve energy independence and security, and further the development of energy infrastructure.

P&TA cultivates diverse partnerships, provides technical assistance, and assists state and local governments to help them:

- Develop an Energy Plan
- Pay for Energy Initiatives
- Design and Implement Energy Programs
- Access and Use Energy Data

Strengthening American Communities

Within DOE, P&TA leads strategic initiatives to replicate the successful models of public sector leaders to maximize money and energy savings across the nation. For example:

The Better Buildings Challenge (BBC) aims to help Americans reduce the energy burden of commercial, institutional, and multifamily buildings and industrial plants by achieving 20% or more in energy savings. BBC has more than 310 partners, including 76 public sector partners led by the P&TA Team (7 states, 44 local governments, and 25 K-12 school districts). Partners overcome market barriers to energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies through sharing best practices, facilitating peer exchange, and accessing technical assistance resources.

The Better Communities Alliance (BCA) provides local governments with integrated expertise, resources, and peer-networking opportunities from across the government, nonprofit, philanthropic, and private sectors. Over 40 local governments from more than 20 states representing more than 43 million Americans are partners in this initiative.

The Sustainable Wastewater Infrastructure of the Future (SWIFT) Accelerator assists state, regional, and local agencies to improve the energy efficiency of water resource recovery facilities by at least 30 percent on their path to more sustainable infrastructure of the future. SWIFT includes more than 100 water resource recovery facilities 27 signatory partners, which include 18 states, 7 local governments, and 2 regional organizations.

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Saving Taxpayers Energy and Money

- The Energy Savings Performance Contracting (ESPC) Accelerator achieved public sector energy efficiency investments of more than $2 billion in three years. DOE worked with 25 partners, including 18 states, 6 cities, and 1 school district to streamline the ESPC process, empower the market with project data, and resolve individual barriers to these contracts. Eight solutions to common ESPC barriers are available on the Better Buildings Solution Center in the ESPC Toolkit.

- From 2014-2016 the Outdoor Lighting Accelerator (OLA) garnered a commitment to upgrade 1.3 million street lights that once achieved will save partners an estimated $48 million/year. Working with 25 total partners that included three states, 16 cities, and 6 regional energy networks. High-performance outdoor lighting best practices are available in the Outdoor Lighting Toolkit on the Better Buildings Solution Center.

- Through public-private financing partnerships that extend the impact of otherwise limited public budgets, communities have upgraded aging infrastructure, created healthier schools, and saved homeowners money. For example, responding to market uncertainty around Residential Property Assessed Clean Energy (R-PACE), P&TA established market standards through the Best Practice Guidelines for Residential PACE Financing Programs publication. Technical assistance is helping to grow market confidence and reduce transaction costs associated with energy efficiency and renewable energy financing.

- The State Energy Program (SEP) and Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) also enhance energy security and maximize the benefits of energy efficiency through technology implementation. P&TA collaborates with SEP and WAP to disseminate successful model solutions, including:
  - Iowa hired regional energy managers to help local governments create energy plans and complete hundreds of energy efficiency upgrade projects;
  - Nevada established the Public Facilities Retrofit Program to accelerate adoption of ESPC by state and local governments. From 2012 to 2015, local entities initiated $35 million in ESPC projects. Another $23 million in projects is in development with local governments and school districts; and
  - Illinois created a robust Trade Ally Program to advance public sector participation in efficiency projects.

Sharing Best Practices

State and local governments are a wealth of relevant energy efficiency and renewable energy information. P&TA maintains the following platforms to share state and local government best practices:

- State and Local Solution Center is a one-stop shop of impactful public sector resources.
- State and Local Spotlight is WIP’s monthly newsletter for state, local, and K-12 officials that provides updates on relevant news, resources, and events for over 8,000 subscribers.
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- Public sector partners receive recognition at the annual Better Buildings Summit of stakeholders across key sectors, including approximately 175 state and local government leaders.
- Technical assistance webinars are held throughout the year to leverage subject area expertise with peer-to-peer exchange and archived on the State and Local Solution Center.