



## **County Council approves Emerald Cities partnership** Energy efficiency, workforce opportunities among goals

Cuyahoga County Council yesterday approved, by unanimous vote, a resolution to work with Emerald Cities Cleveland-Cuyahoga County to create a clean energy economy by developing community workforce opportunities, enhancing environmentally sustainable practices and working to make government buildings more energy efficient.

EC Cleveland-Cuyahoga County is the local arm of the national Emerald Cities Collaborative, and includes the Council of Smaller Enterprises, Policy Matters Ohio, UCIP-ASAP, the Cleveland Building Trades Council, Northshore Federation of Labor, Ohio Weatherization Training Center and other energy efficiency advocates.

“EC Cleveland-Cuyahoga County is an undeniable answer for the need for clean energy collaboration in the county,” said local EC organizer Shanelle Smith. “This partnership will provide sustainable access to expertise from local and national community, labor, business and government sectors.”

Cuyahoga County has made energy management one of its top priorities. A primary goal of the partnership will be to help the county and its political subdivisions meet the U.S. Department of Energy’s Better Buildings challenge. The county has experienced a significant decline in building stock over the past 20 years, coupled with a declining economic base. During this time, energy costs have risen, global energy resources have become scarcer and consumption has increased. These challenges require residents and businesses alike to invest resources to reduce costs through improvements in energy efficiency.

### **ECC and Cuyahoga County Council will:**

- Seek financial mechanisms for county-owned buildings and for the Municipal Energy Program (MEP) to make buildings 20 percent more energy efficient by 2020;
- Create community workforce agreements (CWA) for retrofit projects financed through the MEP. CWAs will ensure equity in public investments for the entire community and through contracting, subcontracting, training and employment policies;
- Actively participate in the Better Buildings Challenge, a challenge committing large institutions to lead in saving energy, saving money, and showcasing the best energy saving strategies and their results.

ECC will support the county’s MEP with technical assistance on project operations and design, marketing and communications, policy guidance and advocacy. In addition, Cuyahoga County will join a national ECC network that provides mutual assistance and shared learning.