State Labor Market Information Improvement Grants Summary

In 2009 the Department of Labor (DOL) announced the availability of approximately $50 million in grant funds for U.S. Workforce Agencies, on their own or in consortia, to collect, analyze, and disseminate labor market information and to enhance the labor exchange infrastructure for careers within the energy efficiency and renewable energy industries.   Of this amount, DOL made five awards to State Workforce Agencies in the Midwest totaling $8,570,994 over 18 months. These awardees included:

- Indiana (with Michigan and Ohio as partners)
- Iowa
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- Ohio

Additional funds were rewarded to Midwest states acting in partnership with others outside of the region. These included:

- Illinois in partnership with the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation.
- Iowa and South Dakota in partnership with the Montana Department of Labor and Industry.

Following are synopses of LMI improvement awards granted to Midwest states and consortia:

Indiana Department of Workforce Development ($4,000,000)
- Working with Michigan Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth – Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives; Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services – Labor Market Information Bureau.
- Developing alternative career pathways in energy efficiency and renewable energy industries and occupations.
- Examining four key areas related to auto restructuring and green job transitioning: 1) Auto Industry Transformation – including the identification of new skills and requirements in a restructured auto industry; 2) Supply Chain Transformation – examining and understanding the new demands and skills within this industry; 3) Alternative Career Pathways – including using jobs in the green economy to help identify alternative career pathways for dislocated auto and auto parts workers; and 4) Skills Gap Analysis – identifying the current and projected skill gaps of the auto workforce, as well as the necessary training needed to transition into green occupations and other high demand sectors.

Iowa Workforce Development ($1,172,614)
- Working with the Office of the Governor of Iowa (IGov), Iowa Workforce Development (IWD), Iowa Central Community College, MidAmerican Energy, University of Northern Iowa's Institute for Decision Making.
- Studying the state's need for building deconstruction and recycling.
- Informing the analysis of occupational demands, skill needs, and current and future job openings.

- Using IWD's data collection tools to develop a Human Capital Inventory of workers that will include: worker locations, income levels, education, skills, experience and willingness to relocate or change to a Green Economy job.

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development ($1,155,488)
- Working with Minnesota's Workforce Information Board, Department of Commerce, Office of Energy Security, Minnesota State College and University System.
- Leveraging Minnesota's established Job Vacancy Survey (JVS), to conduct an in depth follow up Green Jobs Survey and mining Minnesota's state job bank for additional data to identify green job openings.
- Collecting comprehensive data on green educational programs and developing an enhanced state specific crosswalk between occupations and training courses.
- Developing industry competency models for key groups of new and emerging green occupations.

Missouri Department of Economic Development ($1,227,192)
- Working with Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC), Regional Workforce Investment Boards, State Workforce Investment Board, and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.
- Improving the level of information available to job seekers who are most disadvantaged in the current economy, especially given the recent challenges workers in the automotive sector have endured.
- Informing training providers of the critical skills that job seekers need to be successful in a green opportunity career.
- Producing a green industry demand survey and report, green occupation projections, training provider survey and report, green pathways competency model, rapid response career guidance publications, and enhanced career exploration tool.

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services ($1,015,700)
- Working with Ohio Governor's Workforce Policy Advisory Board, Ohio Board of Regents, and the University System of Ohio.
- Identifying the industry and occupation sectors, as well as key green employers, in each of Ohio's economic regions.
- Working with regionally appropriate green sectors and green employers, the project will assess skills gaps for green jobs by evaluating current green job definitions and measures, mapping educational curricula assets, and identifying curriculum gaps.
- Using project findings to develop a green jobs curriculum, produce an Ohio green jobs training directory, disseminate green career pathways modules and information through OneStops and WIA eligible training providers, and develop new green jobs interfaces for the state labor exchange system.

Iowa Workforce Investment Board & South Dakota Department of Labor (some part of $3,877,949)
- Working with Montana Department of Labor & Industry (the lead agency), Nebraska Department of Labor, Job Service North Dakota, Utah Department of Workforce Services, Wyoming Department of Workforce Services, Wyoming Department of Employment.
- Creating a consortium consisting of workforce agencies in seven contiguous states to improve labor market information (LMI) collection.
- Creating process for effective distribution of green surveys and new methods to close the green jobs information gap.
- Creating a sustainable dialogue relating to green labor demand and supply, an LMI system sustaining those relationships, and an established design for evaluation as an integral part of a sustained effort.

Illinois Department of Employment Security (part of $3,753,000)
- Working with Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (lead agency), Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation, North Carolina Employment Security Commission, Texas Workforce Commission, and the Utah Department of Workforce Services.
- Modernizing the national projections program to improve and sustain state ability to provide information on current and future industry demands.
- Developing new tools and training to allow states to routinely provide this information; implementing enhancements to current tools and training; and developing a plan for efficient delivery of a multimodal approach to projections training.
- Producing a modernized projections infrastructure enabling the workforce system, education, and economic development partners to have timely, comprehensive intelligence on the green economy to integrate into the labor exchange system.

This document has been compiled for discussion purposes for the June 7, 2011 Building the New Energy Economy: Coordination and Implementation Meeting, Columbus, OH.