Increasing Low Income Access & Equity Through Utility Programs
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About VEIC

- Mission to act with urgency to enhance the economic, environmental, and societal benefits of clean and efficient energy use for all people
- Energy efficiency, renewable energy, and transportation
- National and international clients
- Innovative program design and planning
- Transformative policy, advocacy, and research
- Clients: government agencies, regulators, utilities, foundations, and advocates
Get the Goals Right

- Set utility goals for low-income EE programs to ensure access to programs
- Use a fuel-neutral metric to maximize impact
- Count non-energy benefits like improved health and safety in cost-benefit tests
Promote Effective Partnerships

- Partner with WAPs to add on EE measures
- Distribute efficient products at food banks
- Coordinate with partners that address health, safety, and building durability
Provide Access to Financing

- Use credit enhancements to expand access
  - Partner with credit unions, community development & housing agencies
- Relax underwriting criteria
- Include health/safety repairs
- On-bill financing issues:
  - LIHEAP payments
  - Disconnects/penalty fees

Efficient mortgage options:
- FHA
- Fannie Mae
- USDA Rural Development

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Encourage Utilities to Offer a Comprehensive Portfolio

- Renters & owners

- Building types:
  - Single & multifamily
  - Public & private

- Measures:
  - Electric, gas, and fuel
  - New construction & retrofit
  - LEDs, electronics, major appliances, behavior, weatherization
Link Efficiency Programs to Low-Income Billing Services

Toolbox:
- Budget plan
- Low-income rate
- Arrearage management
- Discount rate for prepay with no penalties

- Auto-enroll in EE programs
- Deliver targeted savings tips through home energy reports & thermostat apps
Protect Vulnerable Customers During Power Sector Transformation

- Make sure that low-income customers can access smart technologies once proven
- Use defaults & controls that don’t require customers to take action
- Ensure that new rates don’t expose low-income customers to undue cost or risk

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Resources


APPRISE, Ratepayer-Funded Low-Income Energy Programs: Performance and Possibilities (2007),

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