



For Immediate Release

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Grant for Solar Panels Enhances Energy Upgrades in Housing Community *Installation Creates Job Training and Placement for San Bernardino Residents*

(San Bernardino, CA) Southern California Edison (SCE) awarded the Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino (HACSB) with \$1.84 million as part of SCE's Multi-family Affordable Solar Housing Program. HACSB has been aggressively implementing energy efficiency programs, upgrades and practices at its various housing complexes, and this grant will contribute to the on-going upgrades at the Medical Center apartments in San Bernardino.

The Housing Authority has partnered with Helio Micro Utility, an expert in developing and operating solar power systems, to fulfill this solar project. There are 297 apartment units, and installing solar panels atop 96 units and 3 community buildings are sufficient for the entire housing community to benefit. "The solar panel installations are creating a shared system for the entire community and we estimate each resident to save over \$485 annually" states Gus Joslin, HACSB's Deputy Executive Director of the Office of Real Estate Development.

The total cost of installing the solar panels is \$2.4 million, and the Housing Authority will leverage American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) stimulus monies and Housing Capital Improvement funds to complete the project by this fall.

Helio's Green Job Training and Placement efforts will focus on high-demand solar installation skills. The training will be available to a maximum of 40 residents from the site. Of these, Helio anticipates hiring 3 apprentice laborers for the installation period. HACSB staff also plans to help the other residents who go through the training search for related jobs in the solar sector. Helio group will also provide community workshops to increase tenant awareness of the benefits of solar and energy efficiency as well as provide onsite job training.

This is part of a larger more comprehensive strategy the Housing Authority is developing for energy management. "It's our intention to reduce energy and water use across our housing portfolio, which today includes over 3,000 units of affordable housing, market rate, and senior housing," explains Susan Benner, HACSB's Executive Director.

HACSB is developing sustainability plans for each of their housing developments and one specific goal is to create a "diagnostic tool" for energy management. This tool will serve as a model for multifamily housing in general, to evaluate energy usage and select energy improvements which are appropriate to a specific site's characteristics, including building type, orientation and local climate.

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The Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino is one of the largest public housing agencies in California, providing the critical resource of housing to a clientele of which the majority are seniors, persons with disabilities and children. From providing housing and home ownership, to job training and childcare, the Housing Authority helps tens of

thousands of people to elevate their lives every day. For more information on the Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino, please visit www.hacsb.com