

# New Apollo program calls for massive investment in green jobs

**Labor, business, political and environmental leaders discuss plan to create clean energy, good jobs**

The Oregon AFL-CIO and Congressman Earl Blumenauer have thrown their support behind an Apollo Alliance plan calling for the federal government to invest \$500 billion over the next decade to create more than 5 million "green collar" jobs in the United States.

"The New Apollo Program offers a unique vision for reinvesting in America and building our nation's clean energy future," Blumenauer said at a press conference Oct. 17 to roll out the proposal. The gathering was held at the future Northeast Portland headquarters of McKinstry Co., a unionized construction contractor.

In addition to Blumenauer, roundtable participants included Tom Chamberlain, president of the Oregon AFL-CIO; Cameron Hilton, business development manager for McKinstry Co.; Kate Gordon, co-director of the Apollo Alliance; Sallie Schullinger-Krause, program director for the Oregon Environmental Council; and Connie Ashbrook, executive director of Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc.

The Apollo Alliance is a five-year-old coalition of union, business and environmental groups that is calling for major government investment in alternative energy as a way to create new high-paying jobs for American workers. The group's Oregon chapter was formed last year. Barbara Byrd, secretary-treasurer of the Oregon AFL-CIO, is the chapter's chairperson.

"If implemented, the New Apollo Program would do more than create solid job growth," Chamberlain said.

"It will lead to quality jobs that can't be shipped overseas."

Gordon, co-chair of the Apollo Alliance, said that given the current infrastructure crisis, climate crisis, and economic crisis, "the time is clearly now to make this happen"

The Apollo program will encourage the next president and Congress to invest \$50 billion a year for 10 years to produce a "clean-energy, good-job" economy, Gordon said.

Given the current economic situation, some question the ability of the government to invest in the plan, but Gordon dismissed the argument that it's not affordable.

"If we can afford to give AIG \$85 billion — one company to bail it out — we can do \$50 billion a year to invest in our future and in our workforce and in our people and in our environment. It suddenly seems doable. And it is the time to do it," she said.

Apollo's blueprint includes five key initiatives:

- Produce 25 percent of the nation's power from renewable sources and upgrade the energy efficiency of buildings by at least 30 percent by 2025; modernize the power grid; and improve transit systems.
- Retool American factories to build renewable energy systems and high-efficiency and alternative fuel vehicles.
- Double national investment in clean energy research and development.
- Invest in green-collar job training initiatives — including job readiness and service programs, union appren-



**Kate Gordon, co-director of the Apollo Alliance, introduces Oregon Congressman Earl Blumenauer during rollout of the Alliances' new proposal to generate cleaner power and improve energy efficiency while creating high quality jobs. The event was held at McKinstry Co.'s "green" headquarters building under construction in NE Portland.**

ticeships, and community and technical college courses — to provide better jobs and the workforce needed to build the clean energy future.

• Establish a "cap and invest" program to reduce carbon emissions and reinvest resources to build the new clean energy economy.

David Allen, executive VP of marketing for McKinstry, is encouraged by what Apollo Alliance is proposing.

"As a business, we are very happy with what the Apollo Projects is trying to do and has done," he said.

Allen said McKinstry spends \$150

million a year to create at least 300 construction jobs solely on work in energy services and renewables. McKinstry is a \$400 million a year company with 1,700 employees.

"McKinstry matches up with the Apollo Alliance values," Allen said. "It's about energy independence, it's about energy efficiency, and renewables, and about doing the right thing. And also it is very much connected with the workforce — all coming together to impact public policy — that is going to be the big challenge in the coming years."

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