

...Home energy program gets \$20M from feds

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explained. "We want to give these employers a positive customer service experience with unions because we want them to sign with us."

"It's a stretch by the union, and a stretch for us too," said Marshal Runkel, weatherization division director at EcoTech — the first weatherization contractor to sign the project labor agreement. Runkel said weatherization contractors have expressed reservations about working with organized labor, concerned about flexibility. But Runkel saw the ability to quickly add qualified workers as a selling point to working with the union.

DeVita says the Laborers will be scaling back training until the jobs catch up to those already trained. Contractors in the neighborhood phase are expected to hire 15 of them. DeVita remains hopeful the work will come along eventually, and in the meantime, the union is trying to build positive relationships with contractors.

DeVita says Labor Press readers who are Portland homeowners should sign up for the program — and ask that the work be done by union contractors. That's not technically possible now, ex-

cept on homes in the Cully neighborhood, but demanding the work to be done union can't hurt.

Typically, loans of around \$10,000 will pay for improvements that save 20 to 30 percent of a home's energy use — and increase the comfort and value of the home. Homeowners pay back the loans over 20 years, at 5.99 percent interest, on their gas and electric bills. If the home is sold, the on-bill loan transfers to the new homeowner. Homeowners apply online at www.cleanenergyworksporeland.org.

For the pilot project, Clean Energy Works Portland combined a federal stimulus block grant with other sources of financing to total \$4.5 million. That money, in effect, is being loaned to homeowners to fund the improvements. Program managers had hoped to get \$75 million in federal funding to ramp the program up. Instead, the federal government came through for \$20 million, with the requirement that the program expand to three other areas in the state: Hood River, Astoria, and Klamath Falls.

And U.S. Senators Jeff Merkley (D-Oregon) and Richard Lugar (R-Indiana), are proposing to expand the model elsewhere, hoping to attach the proposal to a jobs bill in Congress.



Ron Heintzman, a former president of Portland-based ATU Local 757, was appointed international president by the union's General Executive Board. Heintzman attended Local 757's "Save Our Drive" rally in downtown Portland last month.

...Heintzman to lead ATU

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Pullman in 1975 with a bachelors' degree in political science on an Army ROTC scholarship, and then served two years active duty as a second lieutenant in the Military Police in Fort Hood, Texas. That was followed by 15 years in the reserves. He moved to Oregon in 1977 to take a job as an agent for the Oregon Liquor Control Commission, then attended the police academy in Monmouth, and earned a master's degree in criminal justice at the University of Portland. He joined TriMet as a transit police officer in 1982, and ran for union president in 1988 on a platform of drivers' safety.

During his tenure at Local 757, Heintzman helped introduce and pass laws in Oregon making it a felony to assault bus operators, and requiring the installation and use of the nation's first illuminated and flashing "yield to bus" signage on the back of buses.

Local 757 also beat back several concerted efforts in the Legislature to privatize transit services modeled after the Colorado public transportation contracting law.

Heintzman resides in Maryland with his wife, Linda, and two daughters.

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