

***Testimony to the Energy Efficiency Advisory Committee  
October 6, 2009 – Lucia Correia, Massachusetts ACORN***

Good day, My name is Lucia Correia and I am a member volunteer with ACORN and a supporter of the Green Justice Coalition.

I want to thank everyone today for being hear and to the committee for giving me this chance to speak about an important part of what I think needs to take place in order for the state to reach it's energy efficiency goals.

As you see community, labor, environmental groups and neighborhood residents are here to stand and support the green justice coalition's platform for our communities. I am in support of high road jobs for our communities, energy efficiency services and programs for our neighborhoods and upfront financial support that I know people in our neighborhoods will need in order to be apart of this greening of Massachusetts.

I am here today to speak to the importance of outreach. We need to think about a strong grass roots outreach model if the state is going to reach it's goal. We are lucky enough that in a place like Boston, where I am from, and in our state that we have a colorful culture of families that come from all over the world.

I am concerned being a Portuguese descendant that many people who do not speak English will not understand and be given the opportunity to take advantage of the program that the state is trying to implement - if strong partnership between the state and grass roots organizations is not made.

I worried about the neighborhood residents who may not have internet or a tv to hear about the important programs that will be brought into out neighborhoods that will be good for the environment as well as energy savings.

I know the utility companies have fancy pamphlets and some flyers that they distribute in the mail with our bills – but this is not written in different languages, so I know many will miss out.

I know there are commercials and internet advertisement but lets face it, times are touch and not everyone has a tv or cable and like myself not everyone can use a computer.

I am hear to ask the state and the utility companies to create a door to door model, like we use at ACORN, to reach communities who will need the most support in the upcoming programs.

I am hear to say that every neighborhood, every family member has a right to take advantage of programs and services that will help them lower their bills.

I know that many in low income, communities of color do not understand what energy efficiency is and the importance of what greening our communities will do in the short term and long term for our air, as well as our homes and our pockets.

Committee members, we need you to take a stance and work with community partners who are already working in various neighborhoods across the state, who already have a well known outreach model in various communities and who you know have been around long enough to assist with this outreach.

I also ask that the state financially support grass roots organization in making the outreach program a success because this is a big job and we all need to be united in making sure every household is aware of this program and can use it.

We handed in over 2000 support cards from various parts of the state who support the very platform we bring you today, we hope that you will work with us in making this happen