

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



August 20, 2012

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The Honorable Lisa P. Jackson

Administrator

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW

Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Jackson:

We would like to commend you for your efforts to partner with local communities in EPA's work to protect human health and the environment. These collaborations have often proven to be instrumental in improving and maintaining the environmental welfare of our nation. It is because of the importance of the strong ties between the EPA and local communities that the Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC) is writing to highlight the benefits of the Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) program from our experiences on the ground in our communities.

CARE is an environmental outreach program without substitute, as it provides services to local communities including training on environmental hazards, helping to build consensus-based solutions, and providing technical assistance and resources, including funding, to address the risks they face. Moreover, CARE instills self-reliance as local communities are empowered by the environmental expertise they acquire, as well as the success of being a major player in their own communities' cleanup. The CARE program model of providing the above mentioned services was evaluated by the National Academy of Public Administration, and they concluded it to be highly effective in establishing functional and thriving partnerships between local businesses, business groups, community organizations, and state and local governments to address the myriad of environmental challenges of communities.

Due to the success of CARE in providing its unique, high quality assistance, the program has garnered support from all aforementioned parties involved in the partnership. The positive impacts CARE has made on many local communities are invaluable not only in providing on the ground environmental results but also

building capacity at the local level. For example, the CARE program doubled the recycling rate in Providence, Rhode Island, and assisted in leveraging \$180,000 in additional funds. In southwest Detroit, CARE was also pivotal in eliminating 5,500 tons of diesel emissions in addition to recruiting business partners to incorporate sustainable operating practices. This is just a small sample of the numerous successes CARE has generated while working with a great diversity of communities across the US and on a plethora of environmental problems.

Given the increasing environmental challenges local communities face, CARE is needed now more than ever. Indeed, not continuing support for CARE would be detrimental not only to the countless communities that are in need of the proficient services that CARE provides but also to two of EPA's primary goals of cleaning up local communities and making communities self-sufficient and sustainable. We applaud the CARE program efforts to build a network of CARE recipients to provide a continuum of assistance and broaden these partnerships. We recommend that EPA continue this effort and provide information on these successes so other communities may garner and adopt successful approaches developed through CARE.

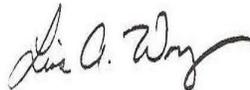
As local government officials, we understand the necessity of making difficult budgetary decisions in a time of diminishing resources. However, given the success CARE has generated and the tremendous outpouring of support from local communities and businesses, there is a clear need to continue the assistance to communities that CARE provides.

The LGAC thanks you for this opportunity to provide our local government perspective. We appreciate EPA's work to promote sustainable and environmentally clean and safe communities nationwide. We look forward as your local government partners in furthering this partnership, and continuing to provide ongoing advice and recommendations.

Sincerely,



Mayor Heather McTeer
Chairwoman



Mayor Lisa Wong
Chairwoman
Expanding the Conversation (EJ) Workgroup

cc: Bob Perciasepe
Gina McCarthy
Jim Jones
Mathy Stanislaus
Nancy Stoner