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## **\$5M announced for Shenandoah Valley Energy Partnership**

### ***New workforce training program to focus on jobs in “green” technology manufacturing***

RICHMOND, VA – The Virginia Manufacturers Association would like to announce its involvement in the Shenandoah Valley Energy Partnership - a grant program that will be partially funded by the U.S. Department of Labor. U.S. Senators Mark R. Warner and Jim Webb announced on February 16 that the Shenandoah Valley Workforce Investment Board (SVWIB) has received a \$5 million investment from the economic stimulus package to fund a new program to train workers for jobs in the region’s emerging “green” technology manufacturing and renewable energy industries. The funding, awarded through the U.S. Department of Labor, will provide workforce training opportunities for an estimated 1,000 Virginians across 10 counties and six cities in the Shenandoah Valley.

“The formation of the Shenandoah Valley Energy Partnership is exactly the kind of forward-looking collaboration we need to help jump-start our economy and create next-generation jobs in the clean energy field,” said Senator Warner in his press release. “This investment in training workers for new green energy represents an exciting opportunity for the entire Valley region.”

“One of the largest barriers to economic growth in many communities is the shortage of a skilled workforce, and I am pleased the Shenandoah Valley will benefit from this investment,” said Senator Webb on February 16. “Proper job training and workforce development will create jobs and enable Virginia to take advantage of the growing technology and renewable energy economies.”

“This is wonderful news for the Shenandoah Valley where we are currently enduring our highest unemployment rates in decades,” said Bob Satterwhite, director of the SVWIB. “Training made possible by this grant will prepare our area’s workers for jobs in energy efficiency and renewable energy industries, including occupations that have long-term demand and offer the potential for high wage, career pathway jobs. We anticipate working with approximately 450 employers, as well as community members and schools in this effort, and believe the whole Valley region will benefit substantially.”

The program’s partners will include SVWIB’s five one-stop training centers and the region’s three vocational technical centers, Dabney S. Lancaster Community College, Lord Fairfax Community College, Blue Ridge Community College, James Madison University and the Virginia Manufacturers Association, among others.

VMA’s President & CEO, Brett Vassey, stated, “We are incredibly honored to be part of this program and we will focus on assessing, training and credentialing Certified Industrial Energy Auditors and Technicians. We will be working with the SVWIB to identify incumbent and unemployed Virginians for opportunities under this program to get trained in techniques that will improve energy efficient industrial processes.”

The grant was one of 55 awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor this week for projects that will enhance job training programs and employment services in health care and other high-growth and emerging industries across the United States, and the only award made to Virginia.