

Senate Democratic Policy Committee Hearing

Whole-Home Repairs Program

Lessons from Year One

Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Opening Remarks

Good afternoon Senators Saval, Muth, Williams, Fontana, and Brewster. I am Rick Vilello, Deputy Secretary of Community Affairs and Development at DCED. Thank you for the opportunity to be with you today.

At DCED, our mission is to encourage the shared prosperity of all Pennsylvanians by supporting good stewardship and sustainable development initiatives across our Commonwealth. With a keen eye toward diversity and inclusiveness, we act as advisors and advocates, providing strategic technical assistance, training, and financial resources to help our communities and industries flourish. I am honored to be part of Secretary Rick Siger's team and strive every day to make Pennsylvania's communities great places to live.

Before coming to state government, I was the Mayor of Lock Haven, a city in Clinton County. As Mayor, I became familiar with many of DCED's programs and services and was fortunate to be able to use them for improving the city. I would like to speak with you today about our newest program, the Whole-Home Repairs Program. We can share brochures with you electronically.

To reach our goals and improve quality of life across the Commonwealth, we focus on promoting community partnerships, effective programs, and managing agency accountability. We work with local governments and non-profits through a combination of grant funding and technical assistance.

One of the programs available to assist with home habitability and safety is the Whole-Home Repairs Program. It provides funding for county-wide agencies to address these concerns by improving energy and water efficiency, and making units accessible for individuals with disabilities. The program also provides funding to the counties for construction-related workforce development.

Eligible applicants for funding directly from DCED are county government or a nonprofit entity authorized via an adopted resolution by the county government. No more than one applicant per county shall be awarded funds by DCED.

The program has been in place for approximately one and a half years. Today I would like to share with you some of the outcomes and impact the program is having statewide.