



Testimony of Building Performance Contractors Association of NYS (BPCA-NYS) on the 2026- 27 Executive Budget Proposal

Introduction

BPCA represents contractors across New York who specialize in energy efficiency, weatherization, HVAC, electrification, insulation, and whole-home performance work. Our members are the businesses responsible for implementing many of the State's clean energy and housing improvement programs. We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on the proposed 2026–2027 Executive Budget.

From the contractor perspective, stable and well-designed state programs are essential not only for achieving climate and energy goals, but also for maintaining a skilled workforce, sustaining small businesses, and ensuring that New Yorkers can access high-quality home upgrades.

Importance of Residential Energy Programs

Programs that support residential efficiency and electrification are the backbone of our industry. They create predictable project pipelines, allow contractors to invest in training and equipment, and make it possible for households, especially low- and moderate-income families, to participate in energy improvements that would otherwise be out of reach.

When these programs are funded consistently and administered effectively, contractors can hire locally, retain skilled workers, and expand services into new areas such as heat pumps, advanced air sealing, and electrical upgrades.

When funding fluctuates or program rules change abruptly, the result is delayed projects, workforce instability, and reduced participation from both contractors and customers.

EmPower+ Program

BPCA strongly supports continued investment in the EmPower+ program.

This program plays a critical role in:

- Enabling low- and moderate-income households to access weatherization and electrification services
- Supporting small and mid-sized contracting businesses statewide
- Creating entry-level and mid-skill jobs in insulation, HVAC, and building performance trades
- Improving housing quality and indoor health outcomes

Our members regularly report that EmPower+ projects represent a significant portion of their residential work, particularly in rural and underserved communities.

We encourage the Legislature to prioritize long-term program stability so contractors can confidently plan staffing, training, and equipment purchases.

Why the Legislature Should Expand Funding for EmPower+

BPCA strongly encourages the Legislature to not only maintain, but expand funding for the EmPower+ program in the 2026–2027 budget.

From the contractor and community perspective, EmPower+ is one of the most effective tools the State has to simultaneously advance affordability, housing quality, workforce development, and climate goals.

First, demand for the program continues to exceed available funding.

Contractors across the state routinely encounter waitlists, paused intakes, and delayed project approvals due to funding constraints. These delays slow critical health and safety upgrades for vulnerable households and create uncertainty for small businesses that rely on predictable project pipelines.

Second, EmPower+ delivers measurable benefits to low- and moderate-income households.

The program reduces utility bills, improves indoor comfort, addresses moisture and air quality issues, and lowers long-term maintenance costs. For many families, these improvements are not discretionary—they are necessary to maintain safe, livable housing. Expanded funding would allow more households to access comprehensive upgrades rather than partial or deferred solutions.

Third, the program directly supports local job creation and contractor stability.

EmPower+ work sustains thousands of skilled trade jobs in insulation, HVAC, electrical, and building performance services. These are local, non-outsourced jobs that provide long-term career pathways. Stable funding allows contractors to invest in training, retain workers year-round, and expand services into newer technologies such as heat pumps and advanced air sealing.

Fourth, EmPower+ is a practical pathway for meeting the State's electrification and emissions targets.

Residential buildings account for a significant share of New York's emissions. The program enables contractors to implement heat pumps, electrical upgrades, and envelope improvements in homes that would otherwise be left behind in the clean energy transition.

Finally, program expansion improves efficiency across the entire clean energy ecosystem.

When funding is predictable, contractors can streamline operations, reduce customer acquisition costs, and coordinate workforce training more effectively. This lowers overall program delivery costs while improving project quality and completion rates.

For these reasons, BPCA believes expanded investment in EmPower+ is not only fiscally responsible, but economically strategic. It strengthens small businesses, protects vulnerable households, and accelerates progress toward the State's long-term climate and housing objectives.

Workforce Development and Contractor Capacity

New York's clean energy goals depend on a workforce that is both technically skilled and operationally prepared.

Contractors today face increasing complexity:

- New technology adoption
- Higher quality assurance standards
- Expanded documentation requirements
- Business risks associated with financing, customer non-payment, and workforce shortages

BPCA has launched a contractor-led mentorship initiative to help address these challenges by pairing experienced contractors with developing firms, facilitating peer learning, and building centralized training resources.

State programs are most effective when they are paired with industry support systems that help

Conclusion

BPCA respectfully urges the Legislature to support investments that:

- Maintain strong residential efficiency and electrification programs
- Provide stable, multi-year funding where possible
- Support contractor training and workforce development
- Improve program administration and financing access

Our members are committed to delivering safe, high-quality, and cost-effective energy improvements for New Yorkers. With thoughtful policy design and sustained investment, New York can continue to lead while strengthening the businesses and workers who make these programs possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. We welcome continued collaboration with the Legislature, NYSERDA, and state agencies.