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**National Association for State Community Services Program  
Proposes Bold Initiatives on Economic & Energy Security  
Response to President Obama's State of the Union Address**

**January 25, Washington, D.C.** — Yesterday, President Obama said, “We can either settle for a country where a shrinking number of people do really well, while a growing number of Americans barely get by. Or we can restore an economy where everyone gets a fair shot, everyone does their fair share, and everyone plays by the same set of rules.”

Tim Warfield, Executive Director of the National Association for State Community Service Programs ([NASCSP](http://nascsp.org)) issued this statement in response to President Obama's January 24, 2012, State of the Union address:

Community Action is the federal government's “fair share, fair shot, playing by the rules” solution. State CSBG funds allow agencies to provide local, targeted, high-impact strategies to help working Americans achieve economic and energy security. Today, impact and efficiency are more important than ever. That's why we've proposed, along with national partners, an innovative new accreditation framework to strengthen accountability and ensure results from agencies funded by CSBG. Further, we urge the President and Congress to invest in already-proven strategies for “creating an economy where everyone gets a fair shot” by supporting a Fair Share Innovation Fund for Community Action Agencies based on merit and proven impact. Just as the President proposes rewarding good teachers with pay incentives, we think good social strategies for creating economic security should be rewarded with additional funding to do even more to ensure that all Americans contribute to rebuilding the economy.

Last night, the President announced an unprecedented Federal purchase of renewable energy to power three million homes. He said that “Nowhere is the promise of innovation greater than in American-made energy.” The [Weatherization Assistance Program](#) (WAP), which improves the energy efficiency of low-income homes while ensuring health and safety, contributes to the economy by reducing consumer energy expenditures, training a highly skilled workforce, creating energy efficiency professional jobs which cannot be exported, and alleviating the crushing energy burden of low income families, who typically spend four times more of their income on energy than middle income families. It's a great American innovation that other countries such as the United Kingdom are eager to emulate. By saving households 35% in energy costs, freeing up those funds and those energy resources for other uses, WAP is positioned to play a significant role in ensuring the success of the President's proposal.

NASCSP proposes that the President make residential energy efficiency a keystone of his federal renewable energy proposal. Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) the Weatherization Assistance Program supported over 14,000 jobs. The President's proposal is an excellent opportunity to leverage the investment the country has already made in training, expanding, and ensuring the quality and success of the WAP. Rather than lose these jobs as ARRA funding expires, this highly technically trained workforce can be repurposed and the entire

program replicated on a massive scale to afford all Americans the opportunity to make their homes more energy efficient, healthy, and safe, as well as ensure the economic impact of the President's new clean energy venture.

Given the historic number of Americans living in poverty, we urge the President and Congress to support these proposals to help ensure that we as a nation achieve economic and energy security for all Americans.

**About NASCSP**

[NASCS](#)[P](#) is a professional association whose members are State administrators of the Department of Health and Human Services' Community Services Block Grant and the Department of Energy's Weatherization Assistance Program.

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