

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 1, 2015

CONTACT: Severn Williams, HERO Program

510-336-9566 – sev@publicgoodpr.com

41 California jurisdictions launch HERO PACE program to help homeowners invest in home-efficiency improvements, save money on energy and water bills

Innovative financing approach helps residents install solar, HVAC, energy-saving windows, water-saving technologies and more; payments made through property assessment, interest tax-deductible

HERO adopted by more than 70% of California communities; funded more than \$552m in projects; supported creation of 4,700 jobs; completing over 28,000 projects

CALIFORNIA, Mar. 30, 2015—Thirty eight cities and three counties across California launched the HERO Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Program this week. The program enables homeowners and commercial property owners to pay off energy- and water-efficiency improvements through their property tax bill.

The HERO Program has been adopted by 290 California communities in the Golden State since launching in December 2011. HERO is now available to 10 million California households. To date, it has funded more than 28,000 residential efficiency projects, totaling more than \$552 million in financing. The program has helped to create 4,700 local jobs through these investments.

"Saving water and energy has never been a higher priority for California households. We're honored to have the opportunity to partner with hundreds of California communities in efforts to conserve resources and stimulate job growth by providing a new financing option for homeowners," said J.P. McNeill, CEO of Renovate America, the company that administers the HERO Program.

A wide variety of energy-saving products are eligible for HERO financing, including solar panels, whole-home heating and cooling (HVAC) systems, energy-saving windows and doors, roofing, insulation, and more. As California's drought deepens, HERO also gives homeowners an affordable way to install new water-saving technologies, including artificial turf and drought-tolerant landscaping.

"The HERO financing program brings home efficiency investments within reach for the average homeowner," said Daly City Mayor Raymond A. Buenaventura. "It also helps to create high quality local jobs by increasing demand for installation services for everything from solar power to drought-resistant landscaping."

Property owners repay the assessment over 5, 10, 15 or 20 years through their property tax bill. Interest is tax deductible, and homeowners see immediate savings on electric and water utility bills.

"We've heard time and again from our contractor partners that HERO financing drives up demand for their services," continued McNeill. "We're proud to offer a product that helps individual homeowners, local economies and the environment all at the same time."

The program launched this week in the cities of Berkeley, Brentwood, Calexico, Calipatria, Coachella, Commerce, Daly City, Desert Hot Springs, Dixon, Fountain Valley, Holtville, Hughson, La Habra, Livingston, Lodi, Oakley, Oxnard, Palm Desert, Parlier, Port Hueneme, Rancho Santa Margarita, Redondo Beach, Redwood City, Ripon, San Bruno, San Clemente, San Fernando, San Pablo, San Ramon, Sebastopol, Selma, Shafter, Simi Valley, South Lake Tahoe, Tehachapi, Walnut Creek and Woodside. It also launched in the counties of Fresno, San Mateo and Sonoma.

“Property owners are fortunate to have new options for water conservation with simple financing packages like HERO,” said Jan Harnik, Palm Desert City Councilmember and chair of the Coachella Valley Association of Governments. “The HERO program offers a wide array of water efficiency products, making it a valuable and viable solution for homeowners to reduce their water use and invest in their homes.”

HERO leads the industry with their proactive consumer protection policy. HERO requires participating contractors to undergo rigorous training aimed at ensuring customers are fully informed about the costs and benefits of the program. Funding for projects is made available to the contractor only after the homeowner has indicated full satisfaction with and completion of the project. HERO also staffs a hotline to respond to homeowner queries that is available for 15 hours each day. In a recent survey, 96% of more than 2,000 participants in the Program said they would recommend HERO to a relative or friend.

Cities and counties need only pass a resolution in order to make PACE programs like HERO available to local property owners. The program has received the Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Award, the Urban Land Institute Best of the Best and the Southern California Association of Governments President's Award for Excellence. Taking part in the HERO Program is 100% voluntary for both jurisdictions and property owners. The program is cost neutral to participating local governments. To learn more about the HERO Financing Program, and to apply, property owners can visit www.heroprogram.com or call 855-HERO-411 (855-437-6411).

###