



## Legislation Text

---

**File #:** 22-0704, **Version:** 1

---

**Agenda Item Name:**

(10 min) Update on Department of Energy Technical Assistance for Energy Modernization for People, Opportunity, Work, Equity, and Renewables (EMPOWER)

**Presenter:**

Nkwanda Jah, NAACP Environment & Climate Justice Committee  
Marianne Schmink, Community Weatherization Coalition

**Description:**

Presentation on the work to date on DOE EMPOWER Technical Assistance

**Recommended Action:**

Hear the presentation

**Prior Board Motions:**

NA

**Fiscal Consideration:**

NA

**Strategic Guide:**

Social and Economic Opportunity

**Background:**

This is a presentation updating the Board on progress to date on the Alachua County EMPOWER Program supported by the US Department of Energy (DOE).

A project road map is nearly complete. Work with the DOE and energy-burdened communities will commence in September 2022.

In April 2022, DOE chose the Alachua County EMPOWER Program to receive technical assistance. Their assistance will advance clean energy-related economic development in the County. Communities LEAP is a first-of-its-kind initiative designed to help energy-burdened communities take direct control of their clean energy future.

Partners in this effort include the NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Committee (NAACP ECJC); Alachua County; City of Gainesville-Gainesville Regional Utilities; Gainesville Community Reinvestment Area and Economic Development and Innovation Department; and the Community Weatherization Coalition/Rebuilding Together North Central Florida (CWC/RTNCF).

The partnership will receive support from DOE to create community-wide action plans that reduce local air pollution, increase energy resilience, lower utility costs and energy burdens, and provide long-term jobs and economic opportunities. In addition, the Project EMPOWER team will work with DOE and its technical assistance providers to develop roadmaps for clean energy economic development pathways.

EMPOWER will pursue strategies for planning and investment in:

- Energy-efficient buildings and beneficial electrification
- Clean energy development
- Resilient microgrids and energy storage
- Vocational and related industry opportunities