



CALIFORNIA STATE TREASURER JOHN CHIANG

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Treasurer Chiang Helps Californians Find Gold in Green Energy Efficiency Improvements

*California Public Utilities Commission-authorized program focuses on homeowners*

**SACRAMENTO** – Feeling the heat? As temperatures rise across California this summer, residents can tap into more attractive financing to make their homes more energy efficient and comfortable thanks to a program authorized by the California Public Utilities Commission, promoted by California Investor-Owned Utilities and overseen by California State Treasurer John Chiang.

The Residential Energy Efficiency Loan Program (REEL) under the California Hub for Energy Efficiency Financing (CHEEF) works with a growing number of California lenders who offer REEL financing. Borrowers choose from a long list of energy efficiency projects designed to make their homes more efficient and comfortable.

“This program is a textbook example of public-private collaboration benefiting hard working Californians who want to make their homes energy efficient and improve their communities,” said Chiang. “California is a leader in energy efficiency, and the REEL program helps homeowners by providing the financing necessary to make smart decisions.”

REEL has helped finance more than 180 projects, representing over \$3 million in financing, throughout California’s Investor-Owned Utilities service areas.

Supported by ratepayer funds from the investor-owned utilities, the program provides incentives to private lenders who offer financing for a wide range of energy efficiency projects, including central heat and air units, insulation, whole house fans, cool roofs, Energy Star appliances and more.

“Due to the state's hard-working energy efficiency programs, California consumers per capita have kept their homes and commercial energy use flat over the past 40 years, while use of electricity, for example, has doubled elsewhere in the U.S. CHEEF is helping us to continue this process with a well-designed pilot for market investments in even more energy savings,”

said CPUC President Michael Picker.

It helped Sammie L. Allen, Sr. of Ridgecrest replace his air conditioner in an emergency situation through a loan from Desert Valleys Federal Credit Union, a REEL lender.

“My air conditioner stopped working and I was getting quotes to get it fixed. My contractor told me about REEL. The lender was really helpful and they had great interest rates. I liked the program so much, I referred my sister,” Allen said.

For financial institutions looking to grow their member base and expand or enter the green financing market the program offers many benefits.

REEL loans are backed by a loan loss reserve, which lenders can access to recoup up to 90 percent of a charge-off in case of default.

“We appreciate that the REEL loans are member friendly, offer flexibility for consumers who may have had financial hardships in the past and allow for a variety of energy efficiency projects,” said California Coast Credit Union’s Senior Vice President of Consumer Lending Mitzi Zarcone.

The security of the loan loss reserve allows a lender to offer lower interest rates, longer loan terms, and/or greater loan amounts compared to a standard unsecured, personal loan product.

Lenders can also use the program’s growing contractor network to reach more customers. REEL’s website [gogreenfinancing.com](http://gogreenfinancing.com) will attract and engage potential customers. From the website, potential customers can find contractors, lenders, and links to other California programs offering financial assistance.

CHEEF is administered by the [California Alternative Energy and Advanced Transportation Financing Authority](#) (CAEATFA), a California financing authority chaired by the State Treasurer. One of CAEATFA’s core mandates is to help the state reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address climate change. CHEEF supports this mandate by leveraging private capital to finance energy efficiency improvements in existing buildings.

For lenders and others seeking more information on the financing pilots, email the State Treasurer’s Office at [cheef@treasurer.ca.gov](mailto:cheef@treasurer.ca.gov) or call 916.653.2995.

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