The Energy Programs Consortium (EPC) today released a report, funded by The JPB Foundation, reviewing more than 40 studies to identify key points and research findings on effective strategies to increase the energy efficiency of low-income multi-family housing. In brief, the EPC report found that the studies agreed on many points, including the considerable opportunity to save energy and help reduce energy bills in a cost-effective way in multifamily housing. However, the studies also described a wide array of barriers and roadblocks that have hindered achievement of this potential.

According to EPC, despite the wide variety of initiatives, pilots, and programs attempting to address many of the barriers identified, none of the studies suggest that any of these barriers have truly been “solved” or “removed.” The EPC report further stated that, future efforts to address any particular barrier or obstacle need not be undertaken anew, but instead may draw on the experiences and lessons learned from the programs and efforts mentioned above, as well as the numerous others studies published over the last 30 years that EPC was unable to describe within the scope of its report.

While there are no common national solutions to these issues, there are emerging practices that are being demonstrated at the state and local levels of government, including “Pay for Performance”, on-bill, one-stop shopping program centers like CNT Energy, and commercial PACE. These practices have the potential to significantly leverage available dollars for low-income efficiency.

The final section of the EPC report discussed potential roles that public and private funders could play to facilitate stakeholder alliances with a focus on multifamily program and strategy opportunities. These opportunities included specific recommendations addressing utility resources and financing as well as other implementation and analytical issues. The report concluded that, “in the interests of income equity, climate change, economic development, infrastructure resilience, and national security, further involvement in this promising, neglected marketplace makes eminent sense.”

A copy of the report can be downloaded from the Energy Programs Consortium website: www.energyprograms.org

EPC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that conducts policy research and demonstration programs sponsored by the four main organization representing state energy and regulatory agencies: the National Association of State Energy Officials; National Energy Assistance Directors’ Association; National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners; and National Association of State and Community Services Programs.