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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 20, 2014

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**MAYOR EMANUEL AND ENERGY SECRETARY MONIZ ANNOUNCE FEDERAL
CLEAN ENERGY GRANT**

*125 Clean Tech Jobs to be Created Over 3 Years; Supporting Innovation and Entrepreneurship
in Emerging Sectors is a Key Initiative of the Plan for Economic Growth and Jobs*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz today announced nearly \$2.2 Million in federal grant and private matching funds to establish the Midwest Innovation Bridge, a three-year project to help startups and entrepreneurs gain access to testing and demonstration facilities in both Michigan and Illinois. Chicago's Clean Energy Trust (CET) and Detroit's NextEnergy (NE) will receive \$745,000 from the Department of Energy (DOE) to establish the Bridge and more than \$1.5 million in private matching funds.

"This funding will help to support the growth of over 100 new clean tech jobs in Chicago, a sector that is increasingly vital to our competitiveness in the global economy," said Mayor Emanuel. "This effort will bridge the gap between the technologies being developed by startups and the needs of large organizations strengthening our economy and positioning Chicago as a leader in addressing complex energy and resource challenges."

The Bridge will be part of national organization, the Clean Technology Accelerator Program (CleanTAP) also announced today to coordinate clean energy-focused business incubators nationwide and provide resources to support innovation and entrepreneurship in the sector. CleanTAP will receive \$979,783 to establish a suite of technological and training resources, connect critical industry and energy sector partners, enhance incubator best practices, and increase access to information about industry resources to advance the technologies emerging from universities and federal laboratories.

"Small businesses and entrepreneurs make crucial contributions to our nation's economy every day," said Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz. "With the right tools, these businesses and entrepreneurs can make an even bigger contribution to the development of advanced clean energy technologies. This initiative will drive innovation and foster cooperation in the clean energy business community, further advancing our clean energy economy and bringing the U.S. closer to its low carbon future."

The Midwest Innovation Bridge will focus on energy technology sectors like automotive and transportation, grid infrastructure and building operations and management that have a strong presence and alignment with established industry in Chicago and across the Midwest. It will support the development of new, commercially viable companies and partnerships through a newly established program that mirrors the National Science Foundation I-Corps which encourages companies to engage directly with potential customers.

“Clean Energy Trust, in partnership with NextEnergy of Detroit, is thrilled to extend our business development and funding support to local scientists and entrepreneurs with this US Department of Energy grant,” said Clean Energy Trust CEO Amy Francetic. “Helping to start and grow clean energy businesses is critical to our region's economic prosperity.”

The partnership will host showcases and recruiting events where startups will have an opportunity to present their products in a real-world environment. Eighty to 100 startups across Illinois and Michigan have been identified between to participate in program, nearly half of which are from the Chicago area. The program is expected to grow 125 new jobs in Chicago’s clean tech sector over the three years, 20 percent of which will be for women and minorities.

The grant enables the Bridge to run programs around commercialization that include mentorship, business development, capital access, and testing and demonstration. It will work with the national organization to develop best practices for clean energy incubators that can be replicated nationwide. It is expected that Chicago researchers will file 10-20 patents over three years in conjunction with the program.

As part of ChicagoNEXT, a platform created by Mayor Emanuel focused on transforming key sectors of Chicago’s economy, the Midwest Innovation Bridge will match needs from large established Fortune 500 firms with technologies being developed by early stage technology developers and start-up companies, as well as government-supported entities like labs and university researchers that focus on transportation, grid and the built environment.

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