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MLGW Receives \$1 Million to Address Extreme Energy Burdens *Just Energy Memphis Coalition Behind the Push for TVA's Investment*

(March 22, 2017 – Memphis, TENN) Today, during a meeting of the Memphis Light, Gas and Water (MLGW) Board of Commissioners, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) announced the allocation of one million dollars to be spent in Memphis on energy efficiency and weatherization improvements for low-income communities. This funding will be used to help lower high utility bills caused by inefficient housing and affecting primarily lower-income, African-American families in Memphis. TVA's investment in Memphis comes as a result of direct engagement by Just Energy Memphis (JEM), a partnership between the NAACP Memphis Branch and the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy (SACE), along with the Sierra Club.

Poor housing, with leaky windows and doors, inadequately insulated walls and attics, outdated energy-hogging appliances, often lead to unnecessarily high utility bills for Memphis families, hitting low or fixed income families the hardest.

“As Memphis families on low or fixed incomes struggle to meet utility expenses, they continue to fall behind in a never ending effort to keep current on their energy bills,” said Madeleine Taylor, former Executive Director, NAACP Memphis Branch and was the force behind the formation of JEM. “I am thrilled to know that TVA has heard the voice of their customers here in Memphis, and applaud the leadership of our Memphis representatives on the TVA Board of Directors, V. Lynn Evans and Ron Walter, in responding to the needs of this community.”

“This investment in Memphis is long overdue”, said Angela Garrone, Energy Research Attorney with the SACE. “We need our energy providers, like TVA, to help lift these energy burdens in Memphis, which are some of the highest in the country. We’ve already seen MLGW work to secure more funding for low-income weatherization, by redesigning its Share the Pennies program, and we welcome this investment from TVA.”

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“We appreciate the efforts of TVA, while realizing that this contribution will make a small dent in the overall weatherization and energy efficiency needs of our communities,” said Deidre Malone, President, NAACP Memphis Branch.

"Although it is hard to put a dollar value on our health, TVA's allocation to support energy efficiency projects will undoubtedly have positive effects on the health and quality of life of many needy Memphis residents," said Rita Harris, Senior Organizing Representative with the Sierra Club. "Looking forward, I am hopeful that we will see an increase in these allocations in the coming years, so that even more families can reap the benefits."

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