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Stimulus grants go to green economy

The purpose of the more than \$2.5 million to be doled out: Creating and publicizing green jobs.

By Jim Morrill

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Three Charlotte-area companies are among those that will benefit from more than \$2.5 million in federal stimulus money coming to North Carolina to foster jobs in the so-called green economy, officials announced Wednesday.

The three are among 18 companies receiving nearly \$1.4 million in stimulus grants announced by Gov. Bev Perdue.

And U.S. Sen. Kay Hagan, D-N.C., announced more than \$1 million in grants. Most - \$946,000 - will go to the state's Employment Security Commission to collect and publicize information about green jobs.

Hagan said \$100,000 will go to Telamon Corp., a Raleigh nonprofit, to train workers in green industries.

"The number one issue on everybody's mind is jobs - jobs, jobs, jobs," Hagan said in a conference call with reporters.

Meanwhile, Perdue, like Hagan a Democrat, announced grants of up to \$100,000 to small N.C. companies to develop and market green and alternative energy technologies and products. They're part of the third round of grants from the state Commerce Department's Green Business Fund.

Among the recipients:

Haywood Landfill Gas LLC, Matthews: \$100,000 to help develop a green energy facility in Haywood County that would convert landfill gas to energy.

SBM Solar Inc., Concord: \$100,000 to help produce solar roofing for commercial and residential buildings.

SunQest Inc., Newton: \$50,718 to help commercialize a solar thermal system to heat residential, building, pool and other medium-temperature applications.

Earlier, Hagan had announced other stimulus grants for green energy.

In October, Duke Energy and Raleigh's Progress Energy each received \$200 million to invest in a smart energy grid. And in August, Charlotte's Celgard received a \$49 million grant to produce components of next-generation lithium-ion batteries.

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