



ICJC Priorities for a 2024 Power Sector Bill

Illinois legislative leaders have almost convened working groups to negotiate a clean energy bill, aiming at passage in November 2024. The following is a list of priority policies ICJC deems imperative to include in legislation passed this year on clean energy. Some of these solutions were introduced in ICJC's [SB3637](#), and some priority solutions have been added since the introduction of that bill.

Policies included in ICJC's Clean & Reliable Grid Act (SB3637)

Strengthen energy efficiency across Illinois

- **Update the way that energy efficiency goals are structured to provide flexibility to address both longer-lived and shorter-lived savings opportunities.** New annual savings goals will encourage utilities to pursue all cost-effective savings.
- **Increase utilities' minimum spending on low-income efficiency programs** and modify minimum low-income electrification requirements to ensure that electrification is pursued for low-income housing only when it will lower annual energy bills.
- **Increase Ameren's savings goals to levels consistent with ComEd's.** This will ensure all Illinoisans have opportunities to reduce utility bills and help improve grid reliability.
- **Bring large energy users into electric energy efficiency programs.** Current law allows the state's largest industrial and commercial energy users to opt out of participation in energy efficiency programs, missing important opportunities to affordably meet our grid reliability needs.

Give customers more electric rates options

- **Create smart, "time of use" electric rates.** Predictable "time of use" rate options where electricity is cheaper at certain hours of the day can save customers money, reduce the use of expensive and dirty "peak" electricity, and lessen strain on the electric grid.

Improve transparency, resource planning, and local oversight of municipal utilities & cooperatives

- **Good governance and transparent energy planning.** SB3637 requires munis & coops to do needs planning, developing plans to meet the same clean energy goals as ComEd and Ameren.
- **Improve transparency, democratic participation, and local oversight.** Increases the ability of municipal & cooperative ratepayers to have input into the management and selection of leadership.

Prioritizing clean energy resources

- **Allows the IPA to consider if energy is clean.** Establishes a preference for the Agency to procure clean energy when the cost is near or below the cost of fossil fuel energy.
- **All suppliers should do their part to procure clean energy.** SB3637 would require ARES to meet the same clean energy procurement goals of the ComEd and Ameren portfolios.



Transmission improvement to strengthen power grid

- Clarify the definition of public utility to ensure merchant transmission project developers can apply for certificates of public convenience and necessity.

Increase access to Solar for All for low-income households

- Changes the rate that low-income households are assessed from every 5 years to every year, to better keep pace with changes in inflation and wage growth.

Additional Policy Priorities for the Clean Energy Transition

Deploy Energy Storage

The ICJC underscores the important role energy storage will play in Illinois' transition to a 100% clean energy future. Energy storage is a critical resource that we need to strengthen our state's power grid, maximize clean energy deployment, increase our clean energy workforce, and reach our climate goals affordably and on time. The ICJC expresses the following principles that inform our consideration of energy storage policy options for the state:

- Storage assets that are subsidized by Illinois ratepayers need to directly support CEJA's clean energy and emissions reductions goals.
- Storage programs paid for by ratepayers must be appropriately sized and include ratepayer protections.
- All storage programs must contain robust equity provisions that mirror CEJA's, such as workforce development, community ownership, equity accountability system, and prevailing wage.
- Community safety, environmental, and economic benefits must be at the heart of any storage program.

Reforms to the Renewable Portfolio Standard

The Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) has been the backbone of our clean energy development plan for over a decade. The RPS informs how the state designs incentives to bring more wind and solar energy into the state. Parts of the RPS are doing well, especially the rooftop and community solar incentive policies. Other parts are seeing less success, such as procurements for large wind and solar projects, which contributes to the state falling behind on its journey to 100% clean energy. We must ensure that Illinois makes good on its commitments to buy clean energy. The current procurement structure for large projects creates financial risks for clean energy companies, increasing overall costs.

Energy Planning and Modeling

Illinois is attempting the journey to deep carbon reductions without a map. The consequences of this are not hypothetical or far on the horizon—we need to ensure that we are developing policies now that deploy clean energy and energy storage where and when it is needed most to build a grid even more affordable and reliable than today's. Energy modeling will help ensure that we have clean energy resources to backfill



retiring fossil fuel plants and stay the course for CEJA's decarbonization timeline. This modeling will be used to rightsize our energy storage targets and fine tune our RPS programs.

Prioritizing Existing Right of Way for Transmission

The ICJC recognizes transmission as a critical component of the clean energy grid. Illinois should prioritize (without requiring) the construction of transmission in existing right of ways, such as highways. This would speed up the permitting process, reduce impact to landowners and the environment, and increase the land use value of existing highway right of ways. A policy solution would include opening all highways managed by the Illinois Department of Transportation to colocation, creating an explicit, non-binding prioritization of placing transmission there, and community benefits agreements for hosts of transmission infrastructure.

Lay Groundwork to Harness Illinois' Offshore Wind Potential

Achieving a strong and reliable electric grid powered by 100% clean energy will require harnessing Illinois' unique access to offshore wind in Lake Michigan. The ICJC is dedicated to paving the way to a 100% clean energy grid for Illinois, in a way that creates jobs and centers equity. Several states have offshore wind energy targets in their state energy plan, as offshore has the potential to provide large scale clean energy megawatts close to large energy loads. An offshore wind pilot project would open the door to offshore wind to potentially scale up if energy planning and modeling determine that to be a low cost answer. A pilot project gives adequate time for evaluating environmental and wildlife effects, and creates jobs upgrading the necessary port with available Federal funding to prepare for a larger industry. Offshore wind projects should be grounded in equity, maximize benefits to environmental justice communities, and create high quality jobs.

Reform Intervenor Compensation Program to Unlock Equitable Access

The Climate and Equitable Jobs Act created several new opportunities for Illinoisans to participate in the regulatory processes that impact utility bills and programs. Of these, the Intervenor Compensation Fund (ICF), designed to help community groups participate in ICC rate cases, was the most tangible and had the potential to be most transformative. In practice, however, the current ICF statute places a significant amount of risk on intervenors and very few organizations have participated.