
ILLINOIS ENERGY FORUM

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Bills of Interest

The following bills of interest to the energy industry have been filed in the 101st Illinois General Assembly, which is now in its second Spring Session:

Senate Bill 135 (Sen. David Koehler, D-Peoria) – proposed amendments have been filed (but not yet approved) that would create the Competitive Clean Energy Act which would eliminate all carbon emissions from the state’s power supply by 2050 as well as minimize consumer and community impacts from closure of fossil-fuel electric generation facilities. On 3rd Reading in the Senate. Companion bill to **House Bill 125** (Rep. Rita Mayfield, D-Waukegan).

Senate Bill 1781 (Sen. Bill Cunningham, D-Chicago) – would implement a plan designed to lead the state to a 100 per cent clean energy future, relying largely on solar energy development. Re-referred to Senate Energy & Public Utilities Committee. Companion bill to **House Bill 2966** (Rep. Will Davis, D-East Hazel Crest).

Senate Bill 2132 (Sen. Cristina Castro, D-Elgin) – companion bill to HB 3624. Would make numerous energy policy changes. The bill is a proposal of the Clean Jobs Coalition and touches on renewable energy, energy efficiency and most major areas of the energy industry.

Illinois Utilities Support Customers and Communities in COVID-19 Crisis

Illinois’ utilities are showing support for their customers and communities in this time of national crisis caused by spread of the COVID-19 virus. While continuing to provide essential utility services, these companies are also making significant donations and contributions to relief efforts by various nonprofit organizations.

The Exelon Foundation, along with ComEd and Exelon Generation, have announced a \$2 million donation to the Illinois COVID-19 Response Fund to help Illinois residents impacted by the pandemic. This donation adds to the more than \$1.15 million Exelon Corporation and its family of companies previously donated to national and local relief organizations in the communities they serve.

“We are committed to lifting up people and powering lives where we work and live,” said ComEd CEO Joe Dominguez. “We are working with Governor

J.B. Pritzker, Mayor Lori Lightfoot and Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle and all our municipal and community partners on making sure we are powering the essential services Northern Illinois needs during this critical time.”

Nicor Gas is donating more than \$1 million to Illinois nonprofit organizations to support work providing essential programs and services during the coronavirus pandemic. Nicor Gas donation is part of an effort led by its parent company, Southern Company Gas, which recently announced that it would contribute \$2.5 million across its operations footprint.

Supporting our communities has been a longtime commitment of Nicor Gas, especially in times of uncertainty,” said Melvin D. Williams, Nicor Gas President.

The Peoples Gas Community Fund and the North Shore Gas Community Fund will donate over \$1 million in total to 42

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FROM THE STAFF

As readers can easily see, this issue of the Illinois Energy Forum is dominated by news about COVID-19. Find out what Illinois utilities are doing to assist the front-line heroes who are fighting the war against coronavirus, while at the same time their employees continue doing their jobs to keep the lights on and homes heated and cooled. We truly are “all in this together”. Please, please stay safe. **IEF**

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Bills of Interest

Re-referred to Senate Assignments Committee.

House Bill 2861 (Rep. Lawrence Walsh, Jr., D-Joliet) – would make changes relating to nuclear power plants and capacity markets. Re-referred to House Rules Committee. Companion bill to **Senate Bill 660** (Sen. Antonio Munoz, D-Chicago).

House Bill 3624 (Rep. Ann Williams, D-Chicago) – companion bill to SB 2132. The bill is a proposal of the Clean Jobs Coalition and touches on renewable energy, energy efficiency and most major areas of the energy industry. Approved as amended by House Energy & Environment Committee. On 2nd Reading in the House.

House Bill 3987 (Rep. Mark Batnick, R-Plainfield) – would prohibit utility recovery of costs in purchasing zero emission credits from clean energy generation

sources. Assigned to House Public Utilities Committee.

House Bill 5363 (Rep. Lawrence Walsh, Jr., D-Joliet) – would establish a formula rates ratemaking methodology for natural gas utilities. Assigned to House Public Utilities Committee. Companion bill to **Senate Bill 3696** (Sen. Linda Holmes, D-Aurora).

House Bill 5663 (Rep. Marcus Evans, Jr., D-Chicago) -- would establish a Illinois Coal to Solar and Energy Storage program to ease the transition for some of the state’s coal-fired power plants to a clean energy future. Assigned to House Public Utilities Committee. Companion bill to **Senate Bill 3696** (Sen. Michael Hastings, D-Frankfort).

House Bill 5673 (Rep. Latoya Greenwood, D-East St. Louis) – would make several changes to the provision of electricity services in Central and Southern Illinois. Assigned to House Public Utilities Committee. Companion bill to **Senate Bill 3977** (Sen. Christopher Belt, D-East St. Louis). **IEF**

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COVID-19

Nonprofits through Donor Advised Funds administered by the Chicago Community Trust.

“We are proud to step up and help organizations on the front lines of this crisis while we continue to deliver the natural gas our customers need to heat their homes, cook dinner, and wash their hands to stay safe,” said Charles Matthews, President of

Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas.

The Ameren Corporation announced that its AmerenCares charitable trust is donating \$500,000 to help individuals, families and communities impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The funding will support relief efforts in Illinois and Missouri.

AmerenCares will provide \$250,000 to the new Illinois COVID-19 Response Fund established by the United Way of Illinois and the Alliance of Illinois Community Foundations and chaired by former U.S. Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker. “Many downstate Illinois families are struggling to meet even their most basic needs,” said Richard J. Mark, President of Ameren Illinois. “This collaborative partnership will provide immediate and significant benefits to our customers.”

MidAmerican Energy will be making \$500,000 in donations to organizations that support food security and community needs that address safety and wellness. This will help to support the sustainability of MidAmerican’s communities and customers.

Illinois-American Water’s corporate parent and the American Water Charitable Foundation announced a \$100,000 contribution to Feeding America to support food banks across the country. The Foundation will also match employee donations to Feeding America, or other eligible organizations, up to \$1,000 per employee, in accordance with its matching gift guidelines.

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Natural Gas Utilities Providing Support to Communities They Serve

American Gas Association President and CEO, Karen Harbert, today announced that all AGA member companies have committed to work closely with state public utility commissions to appropriately suspend disconnecting customers from their natural gas service, one more step to support the communities they serve.

“We understand that many Americans are currently facing unprecedented hardships; access to energy should not be an additional burden for vulnerable customers at this difficult time. Natural gas utilities provide essential energy to Americans everyday—keeping homes warm and fueling critical services and businesses—that is our priority and that won’t change as we work to ensure that all Americans have the energy they expect for all of their needs.”

AGA is working in concert with partners across the nation at this difficult time:

“As Americans all across the country adjust to the sobering reality of life during a pandemic, it is essential they have access to the basics, especially electricity and gas services. We commend the American Gas Association and its member companies for working to ensure their customers will have hot water, clean clothes, and warm homes—even if they are temporarily unable to pay their bills. We continue to urge all utilities to follow suit.”

— **Chairman Lisa Murkowski and Ranking Member Joe Manchin, U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources**

“Millions of households in America depend on natural gas as a vital energy source. NARUC commends the move by AGA member companies to ensure that service is not interrupted for consumers facing financial hardship during the pandemic.”

— **Brandon Presley, Mississippi Commissioner, President, National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners**

“The states LIHEAP directors appreciate the actions of members of the American Gas Association to suspend national gas disconnections for families suffering financial hardship as a result of government orders to close places of work to contain the COVID-19 virus. This action will help to close the gap in their budgets until additional federal funding is made available for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program to help these families pay their home energy bills or other direct assistance provided by the federal government.”

— **Mark Wolfe, Executive Director, National Energy Assistance Directors Association** 

Electric Power Industry Closely Coordinating With Federal Partners

The nation’s investor-owned electric companies, public power utilities, and electric cooperatives are working together to protect the energy grid and ensure continued access to safe and reliable electricity during the COVID-19 global health crisis.

The electric power industry has been planning for years for an emergency like the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as countless other types of emergencies, and the industry is coordinating closely with government partners through the Electricity Subsector Coordinating Council (ESCC) to ensure that organizations have the resources they need to keep the lights on.


The ESCC is holding high-level coordination calls twice a week with senior leadership from the Departments of Energy, Homeland Security, and Health and Human Services, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and the North American Electric Reliability Corporation. These calls help ensure that industry and government work together to resolve any challenges that arise during this health emergency.

“Electricity and the energy grid are indispensable to our society, and one of our greatest strengths as an industry is our ability to convene and adapt quickly to changing circumstances and challenging events,” said Edison Electric Institute President Tom Kuhn. “Our industry plans for all types of contingencies, and strong industry-government coordination and cross-sector collaboration are critical to our planning and response. We appreciate the ongoing leadership and support of our government partners as we all respond to COVID-19 and power through this crisis together.”

The ESCC quickly mobilized and established strategic working groups dedicated to identifying and solving for short-, medium-, and long-term issues facing the industry during the COVID-19 pandemic.


The five current areas of focus are:

1. Continuity of operations at control centers
2. Continuity of operations at generation facilities
3. Access to, and operations in, restricted or quarantined areas
4. Protocols for mutual assistance
5. Supply chain challenges

“The electric power industry has taken steps to prepare for the evolving coronavirus challenges, while maintaining our commitment to the communities we serve,” said National Rural Electric Cooperative Association CEO Jim Matheson. 

Current Issues Seminar in New Mexico September 27-30


The annual Current Issues Seminar hosted by the Center for Public Utilities at New Mexico State University will be held in the state Capitol of Santa Fe on September 27-30, 2020. Among this year's participants are some of the nation's leading experts on energy policy issues.

Registration information for the Current Issues Seminar can be obtained by contacting Jeanette Walker of the Center for Public Utilities at 505-646-4812. 

Austin Hosts EEI Convention/Expo

This year's Annual Convention/Expo of the Edison Electric Institute (EEI) will be held at the JW Marriott Downtown in Austin, Texas from June 7-9.

More than 1,200 top decision-makers of domestic and international firms from energy-related fields will be on hand to discuss critical industry issues. In addition, attendees will be able to attend the Expo 2020 Exhibit Hall featuring new products and services.

Convention information is available from EEI at 202-508-5000. 

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