



Support the Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability (CRGA) Act (SB2473/HB3779)

Our country's power sector has undergone significant transformation for over a decade, yet federal and regional entities have been slow to ensure our aging power grid adapts to these changes and remains resilient and affordable amidst growing demand for energy and extreme weather events. As consumers face increasingly volatile price spikes from regional energy markets and the anti-climate Trump administration seeks to bolster the interests of oil and gas corporations, Illinois needs to build on the clean energy progress of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) and take bold action to protect our power grid, consumers, and our climate.

CRGA Strengthens Energy Efficiency

- Increases ComEd's and Ameren's electric energy savings goals to reduce demand on our power grid and lower utility bills for consumers across Illinois through access to opportunities such as rebates to weatherize homes and purchase more efficient appliances like HVAC systems and water heaters. The new goals bring Ameren to parity on energy efficiency (EE) goals and investment with ComEd for the first time in a decade.
- More than doubles Peoples', North Shore's, Nicor's, and Ameren's gas energy savings goals to reduce methane gas demand in our homes and businesses and help alleviate household energy burdens. These programs are further strengthened by setting a robust minimum standard for spending on building envelope and weatherization improvements tied to a utility's ability to earn a performance incentive.
- Increases electric and gas utilities' minimum spending on low-income efficiency programs to ensure that our state is investing equitably in critical programs such as fully paid-for whole-home weatherization upgrades for income-qualified homes to help families reduce their utility bills and provide more in-home comfort.
- Brings large energy users into electric energy efficiency programs to ensure that important opportunities to affordably meet our grid reliability needs are not missed and that families and small businesses are not unfairly paying for industrial efficiency programs.

CRGA Prioritizes Clean Energy Resources

- Allows the Illinois Power Agency (IPA) to consider if energy is clean. CRGA would reduce Illinois' carbon emissions by directing the Illinois Power Agency to consider whether the power it procures for default supply is clean, establishing 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. CRGA would require ARES to meet the same clean energy procurement goals of the ComEd and Ameren portfolios to ensure all energy providers are sharing responsibility for the energy transition.

CRGA Promotes Transmission Improvements to Strengthen the Power Grid

- Clarifies that merchant transmission project developers can qualify as public utilities and apply for certificates of public convenience and necessity.
- Ensure that transmission developers evaluate and apply cost-effective grid enhancing technologies (GETs) to maximize the amount of clean electricity power lines can carry and reduce the time and cost for new wind and solar resources to connect to the grid.
- Add additional transmission-related studies and plans for utilities and the Illinois Commerce Commission to conduct in connection with CEJA's Renewable Energy Access Plan (REAP) provisions.
- NextGen Highways: Allow for the possibility of transmission lines to be safely located along highway rights-of-way, which is currently prohibited under the Illinois Highway Code.

CRGA Expands Energy Storage Deployment to Support a Clean Grid



- Energy Storage Procurement Program: Launches an initial 2025 procurement round for larger-scale battery projects and directs the Illinois Power Agency to create a long-term energy storage procurement plan to meet future goals.
- Creates a Virtual Power Plant program for batteries and other technologies to be compensated for helping the power grid during times of peak demand.
- Illinois Storage for All: Brings the benefits of batteries to income-eligible households, nonprofit organizations, and public facilities.

CRGA Supports Transparent Energy Planning and Modeling

- Creates the IPA Office of Energy Modeling: This new office within the Illinois Power Agency's Planning and Procurement Bureau would establish open, transparent energy models and databases to strengthen our energy policy-making, support the implementation of CEJA, and right-size our clean energy procurement targets to meet our energy needs.
- Upgrades resource adequacy studies under the Illinois Environmental Protection Act to examine multiple clean energy options and select the least-cost pathway toward meeting CEJA's goals while ensuring adequate resources and electric system reliability.
- Introduces transparent energy planning for municipal utilities and rural electric cooperatives to strengthen local control, oversight, and democratic participation for the over 1 million Illinoisans who get their electricity from a provider other than major utilities such as ComEd and Ameren. These providers, called "munis and coops", are not regulated by the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC), and nothing in this bill changes that. However, munis and coops are not currently required to utilize industry best practices to forecast and plan for future electricity needs or demonstrate that they are making the most cost-effective decisions for their consumers. CRGA requires the munis and coops to do such planning transparently and to engage their consumers in developing non-binding plans to meet future energy and capacity needs and environmental compliance obligations.

CRGA Includes Customer-Focused Options

- Create smart, "time of use" electric rates. Predictable "time of use" rate options let customers save money by using electricity during hours of the day when cheaper renewable electricity is available, reducing strain on the grid and avoiding the use of expensive, dirty energy during high (or "peak") demand hours.
- Solar Bill of Rights: Adopt uniform standards to ensure that Illinoisans who invest in rooftop solar are given fair credit and are not subjected to excessive fees or unreasonable limitations based on their local jurisdiction or utility provider.
- Low-income discount rate: Explicitly clarify that the Illinois Commerce Commission can support low-income households with discounts applicable to their entire utility bills.
- Reforms intervenor compensation eligibility to ensure that entities who participate in Illinois Commerce Commission dockets are able to obtain funding to support their contributions to the cases.

CRGA Recognizes the Need to Address Data Centers

- Directs utilities to propose rules for new large-scale data centers to protect other electric consumers and ensure the facilities have plans to develop clean energy resources to reduce strain on the power grid.
- Directs the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to propose environmental standards for large data centers.