

Setting the Stage: Solar Policy in Illinois

Samira Hanessian - Energy Policy Director

Dany Robles - Legislative Relations Director

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About IEC

Since 1975, the Illinois Environmental Council (IEC) has worked to safeguard Illinois—its people, its plants and animals, and the natural systems on which all life depends by building power for people and the environment.

Representing over 100 environmental organizations operating in Illinois, IEC carries out its mission to advance public policies that create healthy environments across Illinois through education, advocacy and movement building.



We can be whatever
the courage to see



Climate and Equitable Jobs Act

The Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) passed 3 years ago. The Illinois Clean Jobs Coalition, state agencies, renewable energy companies, and individuals across the state have worked hard to implement the law and help bring the vision of CEJA to reality.



Key Decision-Makers



Representative Maurice West



Representative Dave Vella



Senator Steve Stadelman

CEJA was drafted from many public conversations

Listen. Lead. Share.

*Community Listening
Sessions*





Rockford Listening Session September 2018

We Negotiated



- **Clean Energy Jobs Act**
 - IL Clean Jobs Coalition (US!)
- **Climate Union Jobs Act**
 - Climate Jobs IL (Labor Coalition)
- **Path to 100**
 - Path to 100 Coalition (parts of the Solar Industry)
- **Consumers and Climate First Act**
 - Governor Pritzker
- **Downstate Clean Energy Affordability Act**
 - Ameren
- **Coal to Solar**
 - Vistra Energy

‘There is no time to lose,’ Pritzker says as he signs energy legislation lawmakers say ‘gives our state a very clear future’

After months of negotiations on the bill, the Illinois Senate on Monday sent the legislation to Pritzker’s desk on a 37-17 vote — with three senators voting present — after the Illinois House voted last week to pass the measure.

By [Rachel Hinton](#) on September 15, 2021 5:58 pm



What is in CEJA?



Economic Justice



Carbon-Free Power



Renewable Energy



Electric Transportation



Inclusive Financing



Just Transition for Fossil Fuel
Communities



Energy Efficiency



Utility Accountability, Grid
Planning, and Low-income Relief

CEJA by the numbers

\$82M/YR

Investment in workforce development and contractor equity programs

\$41M/YR

Investment per year in former fossil fuel communities and workers

\$380M/YR

Investment in new renewable energy

100%

Carbon-free power sector by 2045, with interim steps

50%

Renewable energy by 2040

1,000,000

Electric vehicles in Illinois by 2030

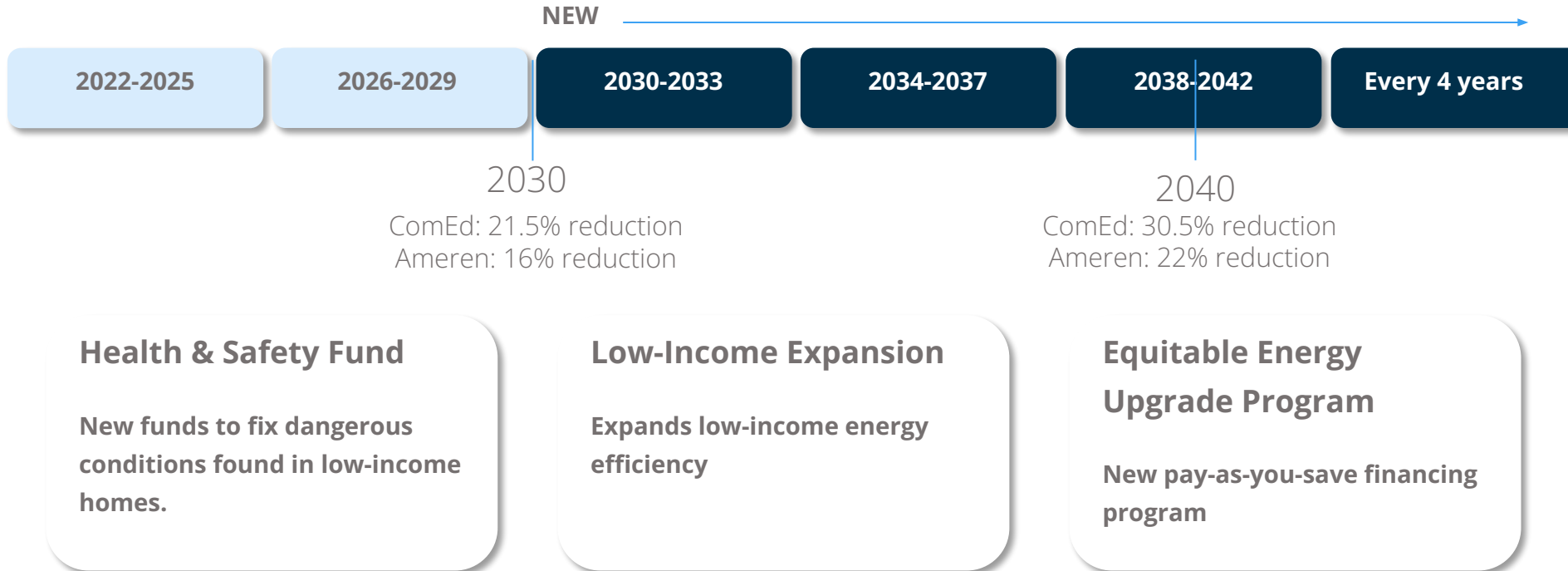
EQUITY AT THE CENTER 40%

Of the benefits and investments in solar power, electric vehicles, and the grid must go to equity investment eligible communities and persons

Energy Efficiency



Expands Energy Efficiency



Defining Equity

Equity Eligible Communities

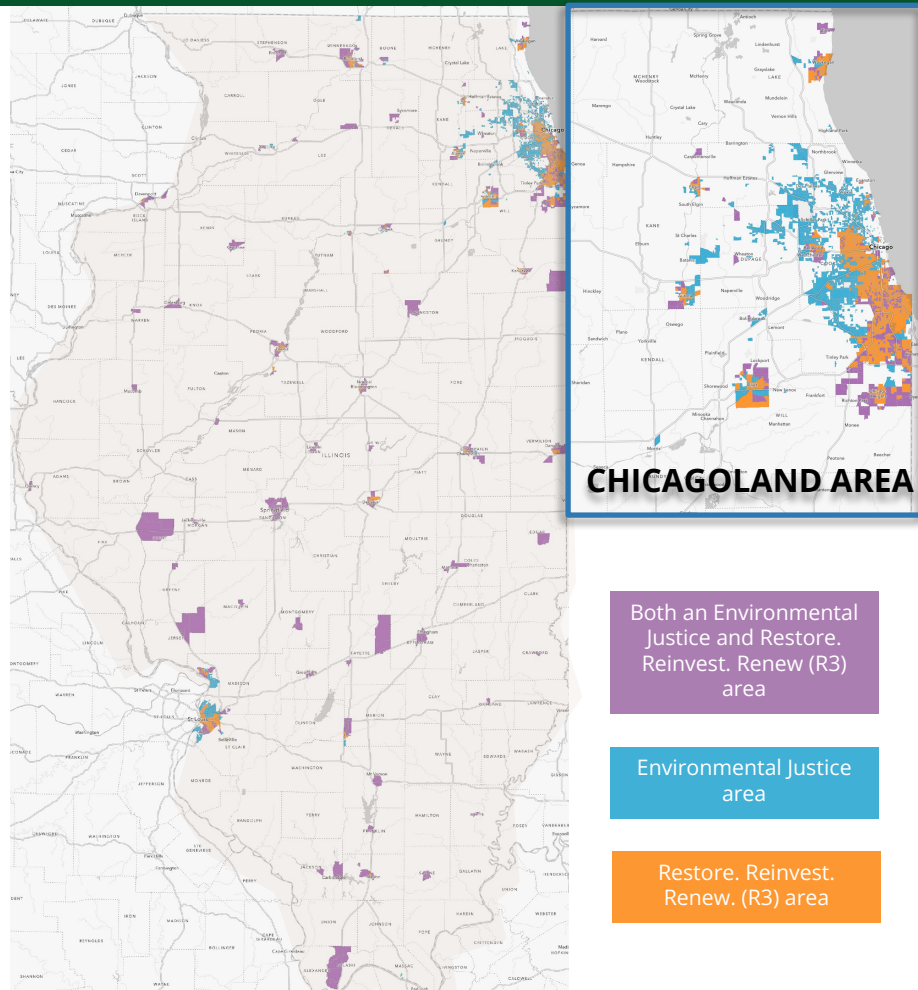
The Climate and Equitable Jobs Act supports “Equity Eligible” Persons and Communities residents of **Environmental Justice** or **R3 areas**.

Environmental Justice Communities

Communities that have a higher risk of exposure to pollution based on environmental and socioeconomic factors.

Restore. Reinvest. Renew. (R3) Areas

Communities that have been harmed by violence, excessive incarceration, and economic disinvestment, as originally defined under Illinois' cannabis law.



Both an Environmental Justice and Restore, Reinvest, Renew (R3) area

Environmental Justice area

Restore, Reinvest, Renew. (R3) area

Workforce Training Programs

Clean Jobs Workforce Hub Network

If you want to get trained for clean energy careers: 14* (16 workforce hubs across the state (with the addition of Kankakee & Chicago being split into 4 hubs as of 2024) (Managed by DCEO, up to \$21 million/yr).

Barrier Reduction Program

Provides resources for publicity, placement and retention to break down barriers to participation in training programs (Managed by DCEO, up to \$21M/yr, merged into Hub grants).

Navigators Program

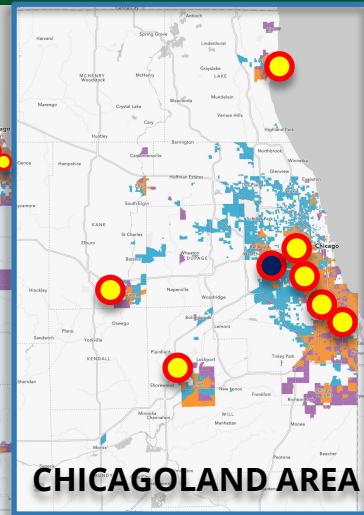
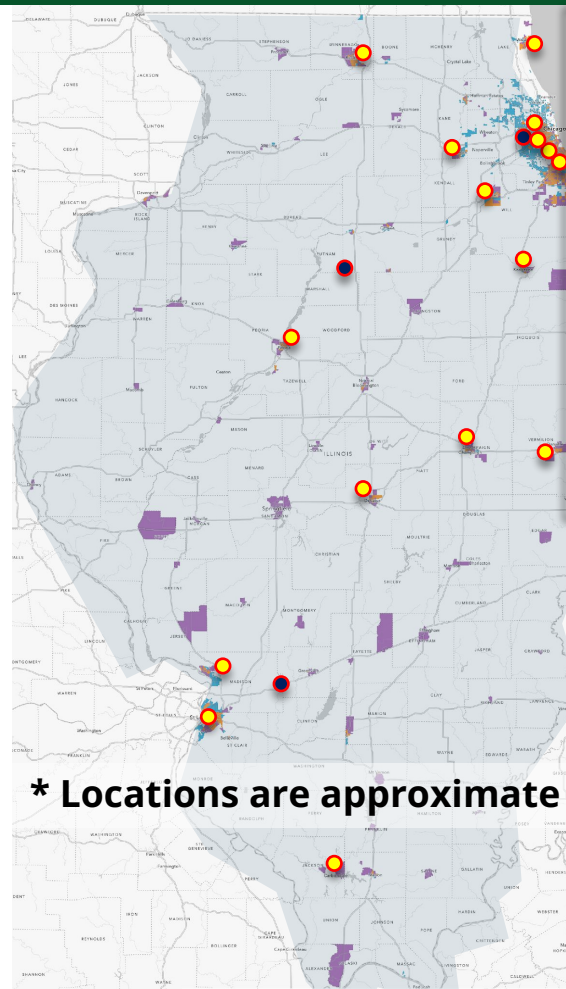
Provide education, outreach, and recruitment for participation in workforce development programs (Managed by DCEO, up to \$6M/yr).

Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program

Trains soon-to-be-released people who are incarcerated for jobs in the solar and efficiency sectors (Managed by IDOC, up to \$6 million/yr).

Illinois Climate Works Pre Apprenticeship Program

If you want to enter union training programs: Provides training to equity eligible individuals for careers in clean energy sector construction and building trades (Managed by DCEO, up to \$10 million/yr).



CHICAGOLAND AREA

Equity eligible individuals are, among other criteria, residents of Environmental Justice or R3 areas

Both an Environmental Justice and R3 area

Environmental Justice area

Restore. Reinvest. Renew. (R3) area

*** Locations are approximate**

Rockford Clean Energy Programs

As noted on Department of
Commerce and Economic
Opportunity Website 7.17.24

Clean Jobs Workforce Network Hub

The Workforce Connection

<https://www.theworkforceconnection.org/>

303 N Main St
Rockford, IL

Energy Transition Navigator Program

Goodwill Industries of Northern IL

<https://goodwillni.org/>

850 N. Church St.
Rockford, IL

CEJA Ecosystem



CONTRACTOR DEVELOPMENT

Clean Energy Contractor Incubators

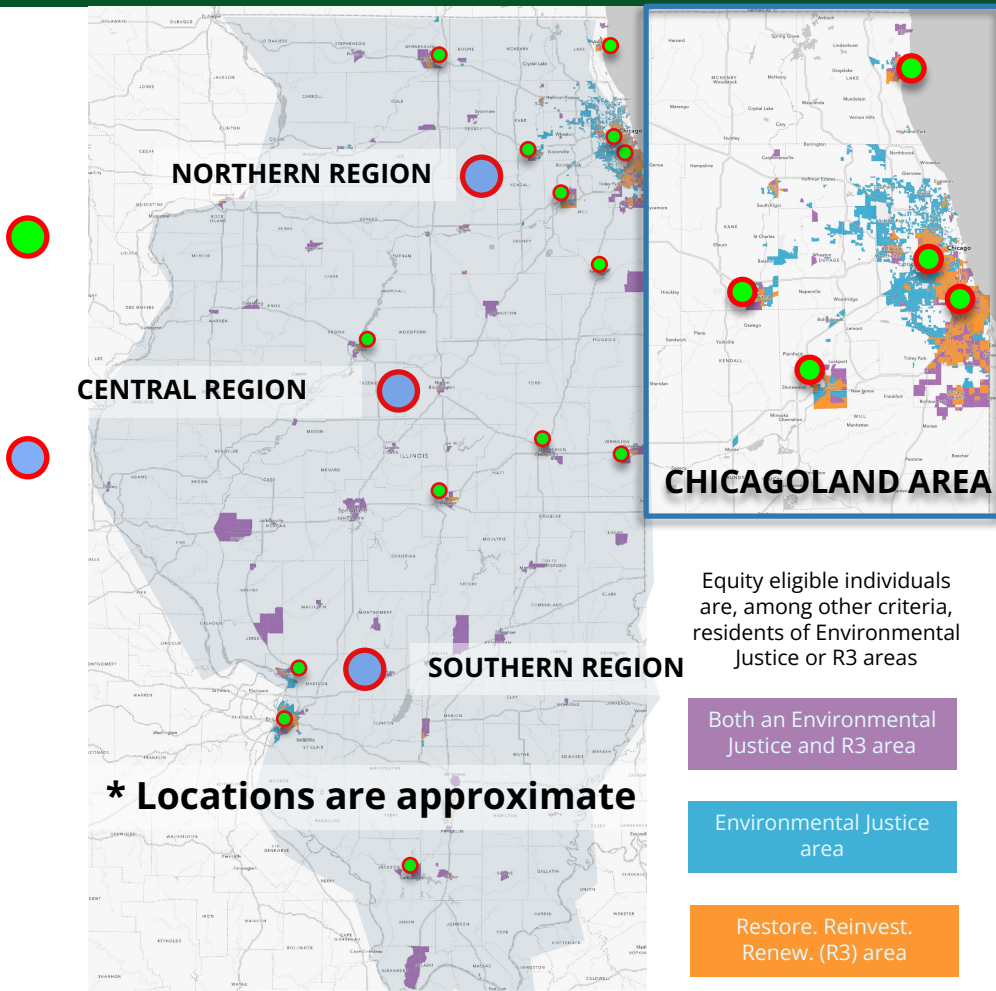
If you want to subcontract on clean energy projects: 14 contractor incubators across the state to provide training, mentorship, and recruitment opportunities for small clean energy businesses and contractors (Managed by DCEO, up to \$21M /yr).

Primes Accelerator Program

If you want to be a prime contractor on clean energy projects: A program for contractors seeking to expand their capacity and fill the role of prime contractor on clean energy projects. The Accelerator offers a structured five-year program with mentorship, operation support grants, business coaching, and assistance applying for certifications, procurement programs, and preparing bids. Cohorts are accepted every 18 months. The program will be operated in three regions: Northern Illinois, Central Illinois, and Southern Illinois (Managed by DCEO, up to \$9M/yr).

Prevailing Wage Support

To address administrative barriers for small clean energy businesses, the Department of Labor will assist contractors with prevailing wage payroll administrative burdens.



Equity eligible individuals are, among other criteria, residents of Environmental Justice or R3 areas

Both an Environmental Justice and R3 area

Environmental Justice area

Restore. Reinvest. Renew. (R3) area

Transformative Renewable Energy Policies

2016

Future Energy Jobs Act (FEJA) created a lot of the incentives we see for solar today

- 2 programs to access solar generation in IL:
 - IL Shines
 - IL Solar for All
- Two ways to access solar generation in IL:
 - Rooftop Solar
 - Community Solar

2021

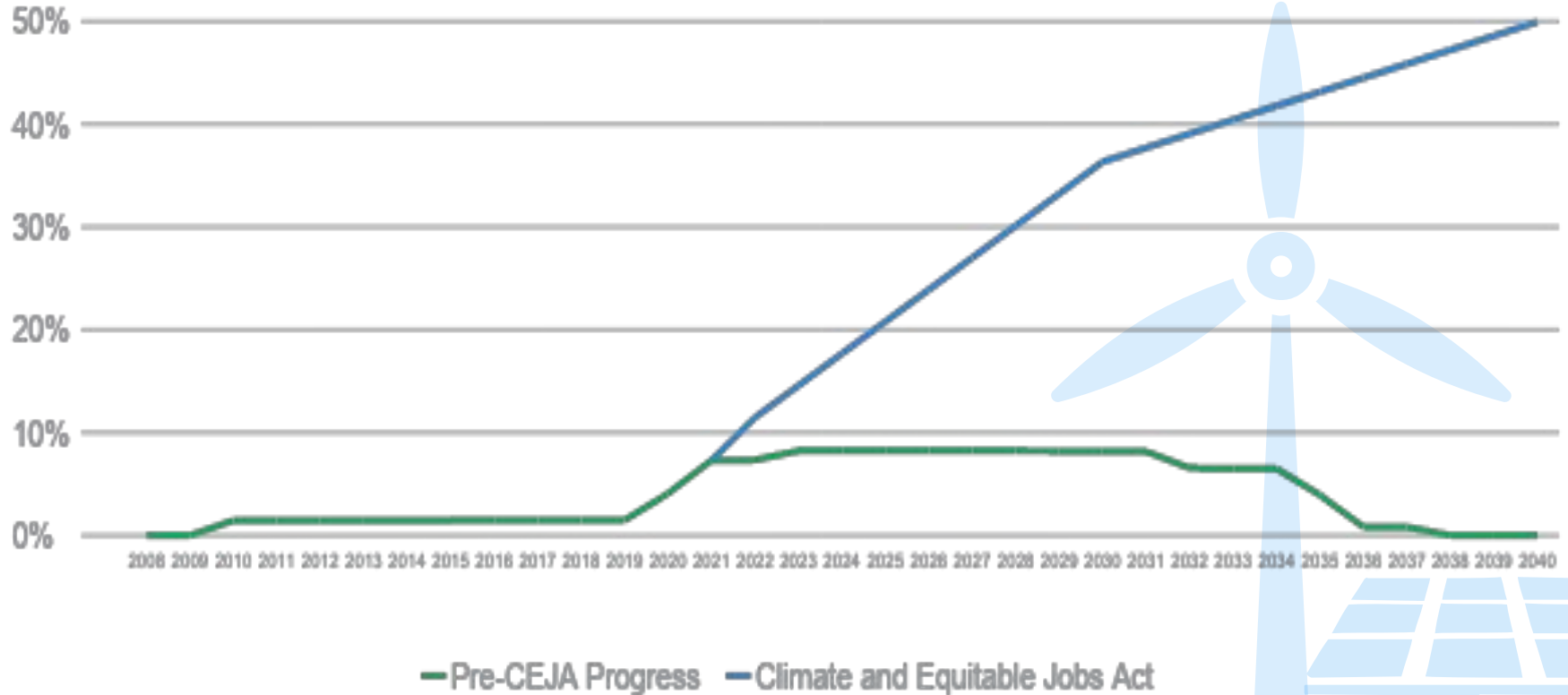
Climate & Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) strengthens and continues those incentives

- Creates 3 new IL Shines categories:
 - solar on schools
 - community-driven community solar
 - RE projects led by equity eligible contractors
- 100% carbon-free power sector by 2045
- Increased the statewide goal to achieve 50% renewable generation by 2040
- IL Solar for All increased budget to \$50M per year

Renewable Energy



Increases Renewable Energy to **50%** of electricity in Illinois by 2040.



2023 RE Legislative Wins

Siting Reform HB 4412 – PASSED! (Sen. Cunningham / Rep. Gabel)

- Prevents counties from enacting preemptive local ordinances that outright ban local wind and solar projects, hindering the state's new climate goals outlined in CEJA.
- This bill passed during the lame duck session in 2023.

Protect Home Energy Development HB 2174 – PASSED! (Rep. Didech / Sen. Cunningham)

- Restricts HOAs and shared townhomes from enacting unfair policies restricting renewable energy development on private property, making it easier for property owners to set up solar.

Park District Solar Expansion HB 2192 – PASSED! (Rep. Didech / Sen. Ellman)

- Allows park districts to enter into leases for renewable energy development.

2024 RE Legislative Wins

Solar Facility Setbacks HB 4135 — STOPPED! (Rep. DeLuca)

- Undermined our state's law preventing excessive county regulation of solar developments. The proposed setback increase would halt most solar projects across the state.

Solar Bill of Rights HB5315 — To be continued... (Rep. Didech)

- Prohibits burdensome policies for electric utility customers who want to generate their own energy. While this legislation was ultimately held in the House, we will continue to work on this bill throughout the summer.

Right of First Refusal HB 5234 — STOPPED! (Rep. Walsh)

- Granted Ameren and ComEd the right of first refusal (ROFR) for interstate transmission, making it more costly and difficult to bring new renewable energy to and through Illinois.

Community Solar Opportunities

- **Illinois Solar For All (IPA)**
 - a. Low Income Community Solar
- **Illinois Shines (IPA)**
 - a. Distributed Generation Solar (on-site)
 - IL Power Agency (IPA) has an Approved Vendor (AV) list + Equity Eligible Contractors (EECs)
 - b. Community Solar (traditional & community-driven)
 - Administered by Elevate
- **The Community Solar Energy Sovereignty Grant Program (DCEO)**
 - a. Supports pre-development and development of community solar projects that promote community ownership and energy sovereignty

Peak Demand Control

- **Hourly Pricing**

- Energy rate changes every hour
- You can manage your costs by running appliances like the dishwasher when the price of electricity is lower, such as nights and weekends.

- **Peak Time Rewards**

- The utility will alert you in advance of a “high usage period”
- Reduce your usage during those hours and earn a credit for every kWh you save

- <https://www.comed.com/ways-to-save/for-your-home>

Rooftop Solar And Incentives

Federal Investment Tax Credit

- Set at 30% for the next ten years (includes projects installed in 2022) - IRA
- Based on project costs– includes labor costs, system installation, interconnection wiring, energy storage system, etc.

State Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SRECs)

- Through IL Shines - Goal for IL to reach 50% renewable energy by 2040
- Based on how much electricity your system will produce over 15 years - covers ~ 40%
- Helps IL meet its renewable energy goals!

Utility Net Metering

- Receive credit on your electric bills for energy sent to the grid
- Credits roll over from month to month, annual true-up in April
- Rate structure to change slightly for new customers next year

Solar & The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)

- **Investment Tax Credit (ITC)**
 - a. Can reduce upfront investment costs for a project like a Solar PV System
- **Low-Income Communities Bonus Credit program**
 - a. Provides a bonus for solar and wind energy projects located in low-income communities or serving low-income households
 - b. Treasury and DOE are accepting applications
- **New Energy Efficient Homes Credit (45L)**
- **Energy Efficient Commercial Buildings Deduction**
- **US EPA Solar For All under the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF)**

\$156 MILLION

Awarded to the IFA from the US EPA's Solar For All program that will bring the benefits of solar energy to low-income and disadvantaged communities across the state.

Rockford Insights

- Awarded **\$194,270** from the Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) (IIJA/BIL)
- To host **1 of 13 DCEO CEJA Contractor Incubator Hubs** to deliver Clean Energy Incubator Program (CEJA)
- Whitman Street Interchange Reconfiguration Project awarded over **\$7M** from the US DOT Neighborhood Access and Equity (NAE) Grant Program (IRA) Goals:
 - a. Remove the urban interchange constructed in the early 1960's, and
 - b. Re-establish the grid roadway system.

Thank You!

Connect with us
<https://ilenviro.org/>

General inquiries
info@ilenviro.org

Dany Robles
Legislative Relations Director
dany@ilenviro.org

Samira Hanessian
Energy Policy Director
samira@ilenviro.org

