
ILLINOIS ENERGY FORUM

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Bill of Interest

The following bills of interest to the energy industry have been introduced into the 100th Illinois General Assembly for consideration during its Spring 2017 session:

Senate Bill 71 (Sen. Don Harmon, D-Oak Park) – Amended in committee; would now clarify certification procedures for wind power installers. Approved by the Senate Energy Committee. On Second Reading in the Senate.

Senate Bill 611 (Sen. Scott Bennett, D-Champaign) – would establish the Mahomet Aquifer Protection Task Force to address the issue of maintaining clean drinking water for communities served by the Mahomet Aquifer. Approved by the Senate Environment Committee. On Second Reading in the Senate.

Senate Bill 1381 Sen. Bill Cunningham, D-Chicago) – would make significant changes in the Telecommunications Act designed to modernize much of the state’s telecommunications system, especially voice communications. Approved by the Senate Telecommunications and Information Technology Committee. On Second Reading in the Senate.

ICC Initiates NextGrid Utility of the Future Study

The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) recently launched its consideration of the utility of the future, announcing *NextGrid* – a statewide collaborative to transform Illinois’ energy landscape and economy.

Convened by the Commission and led by an outside, expert facilitator, *NextGrid* is an approximately eighteen-month consumer-focused and collaborative study. In addition to identifying and exploring future technological advancements and utility and regulatory models, the study will inform policymakers on the issues and challenges associated with a quickly evolving energy landscape and provide recommendations to the ICC and Illinois General Assembly on a range of tangible actions and policies available to best benefit customers and communities

throughout Illinois.

“Illinois has a long history of progressive leadership in energy policy,” said ICC Chairman Brien J. Sheahan. “Like the 1997 Electric Service Customer Choice and Rate Relief Law, the 2011 Energy Infrastructure Modernization Act, and the 2016 Future Energy Jobs Act, *NextGrid* holds the promise to further Illinois’ leadership in the new energy economy. We need to support innovation by utilities that build on our strengths, creates value for consumers, and contributes to growth and development.”

The Commission study fulfills a recommendation of Governor Bruce Rauner’s Transition Committee and complements the December 2016 passage of the landmark Future Energy Jobs Act, a bipartisan effort enacted by the Governor and the Illinois General Assembly which, among

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FROM THE STAFF

We wanted to pass along a message from our friends at **Safe Electricity**, the award-winning, nationally recognized electrical safety program developed by Illinois investor-owned, cooperative and municipal utilities and the University of Illinois: “be careful around electricity this Spring”. We all have spring cleaning projects this time of year and unfortunately there are electrical safety incidents that occur every year in the course of completing those projects. For all those DIY folks out there, the word is “careful”, especially around electricity. **IEF**

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Bills

Senate Bill 1383 (Sen. Sue Rezin, R-Peru) – would have amended various sections of the state’s Underground Utility Facilities Damage Protection Act, which sets standards for excavation near underground utility facilities. Amended in committee to become a shell bill in the same subject matter area. Approved by the Senate Energy Committee. On Second Reading in the Senate. Companion bill to **House Bill 3634** (Rep. Brandon Phelps, D-Harrisburg), which has been re-assigned from the House Executive Committee to the House Rules Committee.

House Bill 2952 (Rep. Tom Morrison, R-Palatine) – would require the Illinois Commerce Commission to change its rules regarding cost recovery for natural gas main

extensions. After a subject matter hearing, the bill was re-assigned from the House Public Utilities Committee to the House Rules Committee.

House Bill 3042 (Rep. Jay Hoffman, D-Collinsville) – would create a grant program to stimulate development of clean coal technology power generation. The grant program is subject to legislative appropriations. Approved by the House Energy Committee. On Second Reading in the House of Representatives. **IEF**

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ICC

Other things, creates policy support for zero carbon emission baseload generation and the expansion of energy efficiency programs, net metering, solar and wind energy.

Many experts believe that the electric utility industry will evolve more in the next ten years than it has in the past century with new technologies changing the way electricity is bought, sold, generated and consumed. This transformation raises important questions about how all aspects of the system interact and what that may mean for consumers, regulators, utilities and other stakeholders.

Chairman Sheahan described *NextGrid* as an inclusive, comprehensive and collaborative process that will result in a fair assessment of policy options in light of statutory goals and the needs of Illinois consumers. “All stakeholders are invited to participate, from consumer groups to environmental advocates, utili-

ties, academics, technology leaders, government agencies and any other interested parties,” Sheahan said. **IEF**

Ameren Illinois Provides Bill Payment Assistance to East St. Louis and Collinsville Area Customers

Ameren Illinois has partnered with two local agencies to help more than 1,100 qualified low-income customers reduce their energy bills.

One-time bill payment grants of up to \$150 were provided to approximately 650 customers during a customer assistance event at the Jackie Joyner-Kersey Center in East St. Louis. Another 460 customers received grants during an event at the Collinsville Senior Citizens Center.

Attendees also met with Ameren Illinois advisors to establish payment plans and discuss strategies for reducing future bills by implementing energy-efficiency strategies.

Ameren Illinois partnered with St. Clair County’s Intergovernmental Grants Department for the event in East St. Louis and with Madison County Community Development for the event in Collinsville.

“This event was a great success,” said Kristen Poshard, chief deputy administrator of Madison County Community Development. “In just a few hours, we were able to help hundreds of individuals and families apply grants to their utility bills.” **IEF**

Dynergy, Inc. Invests \$200,000 into East St. Louis

On March 31, Dynergy Inc., the largest retail electricity supplier in Illinois and a major power generator, announced a \$200,000 investment in East Side Aligned, a collective impact movement that aims to improve outcomes for young people in the greater East St. Louis area. The investment is designated for strengthening and improving local public safety efforts. Dynergy president and CEO Robert Flexon made the announcement at the East Side Aligned State of the Movement address that morning, where nearly 200 business, philanthropic and civic leaders gathered at New Life Community Church in East St. Louis to discuss progress happening in the community.

“As a power generation company, we continuously look for ways to improve our environmental impact and safety of our workers and the surrounding communities. Safety is a core value of ours and it always has to come first and you always have to be aware of it,” said Flexon. “Our commitment to safety extends far beyond the fence line of our generation plants. That is why we are pleased to invest in East St. Louis through East Side Aligned and to focus on creating a safer community, not just for children and youth, but for everyone who calls this community home. It is only when you feel safe that you can focus on achieving great things.”

Dynergy’s investment, which builds on a \$25,000 donation made in 2013, will provide backbone staff and support to enhance the capacity and skills of local police departments; provide training for local officers on community-oriented policing; and create more avenues for residents and police to communicate. Last fall, St. Clair County Chairman Mark Kern announced the county, in partnership with East Side Aligned, had received a \$1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Justice to develop and implement a plan to reduce youth violence and victimization. At the event this morning, county administrator Debra Moore said that they are on track to finalize the plan this summer with hopes of implementation quickly following.

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Clinton Power Station Celebrates 30 Years of Clean Energy and Economic Benefits

Exelon Generation’s Clinton Power Station celebrated its 30th anniversary on March 29 at the Clinton Area Chamber of Commerce Business Expo. Exelon employees were on hand to celebrate the nuclear plant’s 30-year history and its continued support for local families, businesses and the community. The Future Energy Jobs Act, signed into law in Illinois late last year, is expected to preserve the plant, the clean energy it generates, and its millions of dollars in contributions to the regional economy for at least another 10 years.

“We are very thankful to Governor Rauner, legislative leaders and the Illinois General Assembly for their efforts to keep the plant operating,” said Marian Brisard, executive director of the Clinton Area Chamber of Commerce. “Clinton Power Station is economically vital to this community. The property taxes the plant pays directly benefit local schools, libraries, county services and road programs. We are grateful Illinois lawmakers took action to do what’s right, not just for the future of Clinton and this region, but for the entire state.”

“Exelon Generation participates in the Clinton Business Expo each year, but this year is special,” said Clinton Site Vice President Ted Stoner. “This year, with the passage of the Future Energy Jobs Act, we are confident that Clinton Station will play a long-term role in driving a new clean energy economy in Illinois, while creating and saving thousands of good-paying jobs.”

“We are thrilled the plant is going to continue operating here in Clinton,” said Richard Snelson, owner of Clinton Illinois Picture Framing and a participant in this year’s Business Expo.

The Clinton Power Station and Quad Cities Generating Station are expected to be preserved for at least 10 years by the Future Energy Jobs Act. Saving the two nuclear plants in Illinois will also maintain 4,200 direct and indirect jobs as well as \$1.2 billion in annual economic activity. **IEF**

IRPS Conference to Be Held on April 27

The Institute for Regulatory Policy studies at Illinois State University is sponsoring a conference entitled “New Legislation on Future Energy Jobs, Lead & Water Pollutants and Federal Policies” on Thursday, April 27, 2017 at the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel in Springfield, Illinois.

The conference will focus on three issues concerning (1) recent legislation on lead testing and how water utilities are meeting the challenge; (2) changing perspectives on energy from a national outlook; and (3) the implementation and impact of the Future Energy Jobs Bill.

For more information and registration, please visit our website at www.irps.ilstu.edu. **IEF**

Current Issues Seminar In New Mexico April 23-26

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 Sante Fe on April 23-26, 2017. 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 Walter of the Center for Public Utilities at 505-646-4812. **IEF**

Illinois Energy Forum is published monthly by the Illinois Energy Association, Springfield, Illinois. For questions or comments, please contact James Monk at **217-523-7348** or e-mail at jmonk@ilenergyassn.org.

For name or e-mail address changes, contact Erica Drake at **217-523-7348**, fax at **217-523-0643**, or e-mail at edrake@ilenergyassn.org.