

News

from the Illinois Commerce Commission

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ICC Adopts Governor's Sustainable Energy Plan

Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency plan will protect consumers and the environment

CHICAGO – Following more than five months of public comment and deliberation, the Illinois Commerce Commission adopted Governor Blagojevich's Sustainable Energy Plan. The ICC resolution issued today largely reflects the proposal the Governor submitted to the ICC last February that called for both a Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard.

The resolution recognizes the benefits of renewable energy noted in a recent ICC staff report of the Governor's proposal. ICC staff concluded that the plan offers both consumer and environmental protections, noting that renewable energy can "provide a hedge against rising fossil fuel prices and to reduce the amount of pollutants released by the burning of fossil fuels." The staff also noted that energy efficiency can lower electricity costs, improve reliability of the electricity system and even help make energy markets more competitive.

"With oil, natural gas and coal prices at near record highs, the Governor's plan offers Illinois ratepayers a hedge against high energy prices," noted Commissioner Bob Lieberman. "As Illinois' energy needs continue to grow, now is the right time to invest in non-polluting, homegrown energy sources to help meet this growing need while reducing dependence on imported fossil fuels – investing in renewable energy and energy efficiency will deliver these benefits."

"Governor Blagojevich demonstrated great leadership in providing a platform for all stakeholders to reach agreement on a forward thinking and environmentally responsible plan to ensure that Illinois' residents have access to green power and opportunities to save money on their electricity bills," said ICC Chairman Ed Hurley.

Hurley also commended Commissioner Lieberman's stewardship of the process that led to consensus support for the plan among utility companies, public interest groups and other stakeholders.

To implement the Renewable Portfolio Standard, Illinois' electric utility companies will begin acquiring 2 percent of their electricity from renewable sources like wind, methane captured from landfills and crops and organic waste by the end of 2006, ramping up in 1 percent annual increments to 8 percent by 2013. Under the Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard utility companies will create new programs to reduce 10 percent of rising electricity demand by 2007 by helping their customers invest in energy saving equipment and technology. By 2015, these energy efficiency programs will reduce 25 percent of Illinois' increasing energy demand.

The ICC expects Illinois' electric utilities to file plans to implement the Sustainable Energy Plan within 30 days.

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