



GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Report

June 18th, 2021

This Week in Illinois

Session Update

After a two week break, the Senate returned to Springfield for one day of session on Tuesday, June 15th. The House returned on Wednesday the 16th for one day of action as well. Legislative action was limited to just a few categories.

While it was expected that the legislature would vote on an omnibus energy package, no such vote took place. No agreement was reached between stakeholders, therefore no energy-related legislation was officially filed or voted upon.

The Senate Energy & Public Utilities Committee did hold a brief subject matter hearing on energy proposals on Tuesday morning while the House canceled a similar subject matter hearing that was scheduled within the House Labor & Commerce Committee on Wednesday morning. At this time it is unclear when the legislature will return to vote upon an energy package. For more information on the energy package or Energy Council membership please contact Executive Director Alec Messina at amessina@ilchamber.org.

The House has adjourned until the call of the Speaker. The Senate has also adjourned until the call of the Senate President.

This week, both the House and the Senate released the dates for the Fall 2021 Veto Session. Both Chambers will be in session October 19th-21st and October 26th-28th.

Illinois Chamber and 24 Local Chambers Respond to Omnibus Energy Package Debate

Earlier this week, when debates over the omnibus energy package were still underway, the Illinois Chamber of Commerce and 24 Local Chambers from across the state sent the following letter to Members of the Illinois House and Senate:

The undersigned write today to urge you to continue to carefully consider energy legislation, and its impact on ratepayers, as a comprehensive proposal begins to come together. While we appreciate the need to address climate and move towards a clean energy future, such a transition needs to be careful, taking into account critical issues such as affordability and reliability. As we just now begin to emerge from the disastrous effects on our economy caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the last thing businesses in Illinois need is to be hit with a massive increase in electricity costs brought on by flawed legislation.

We believe there are numerous areas of grave concerns with recently drafted legislation, but are in particular concerned with the following:

- The premature closure by 2035 of the Prairie State Energy Campus & Springfield CWLP Dallman 4 will result in increased costs to electric cooperatives and several municipalities who will still have to pay several years of bond debt service while also paying for replacement power. Further, language that includes declining greenhouse emissions caps for all fossil fuel units over 25MW starting in year 2024 will have a similar effect, forcing those facilities to close before bonds are repaid.*
- Further, those declining caps will imperil construction of other new projects, causing the loss of a number of other good paying jobs, both union and otherwise. The declining caps will be set in aggregate and for each unit. Twelve years into operation, allowable GHG will be reduced to 60%. There is no feasible way to do this other than reduce operations, or invest enormous sums of money into unproven carbon capture technology with no state funding to help offset the cost.*

- *Estimates of the proposed subsidy to Exelon suggest that the proposal provides \$700 million over a six year span. This is significantly more than the independent audit obtained by the Administration, which only looked at the financial needs of two facilities, and not the third included in the various proposals.*
- *Continued inclusion of self-direct authority for energy efficiency for large industrial customers, and a workable definition of qualified CHP to be deemed as a renewable, are important components for a final energy package.*

The Illinois Chamber and our local chamber partners below approach energy policy, generally, by supporting competitive markets and competitive costs for energy consumers, and endorsing efforts to support a reliable and resilient grid. Viewing energy policy through those tenets, we believe that it is critical to address the concerns highlighted above, and to have a clear understanding of the impacts to ratepayers that will result should legislation as presently constituted be adopted.

View the Local Chamber partners and read the entire letter [here](#).

Legislation that Moved in the Past Week:

[HB 165, Carbon Capture](#) the House unanimously concurred on the Senate amendment and now awaits the Governor's signature. This bill, as amended, provides that subject to appropriation, the Prairie Research Institute at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, in consultation with an intergovernmental advisory committee, must file a report on potential for carbon capture, utilization, and storage as a climate mitigation technology throughout Illinois with the Governor and General Assembly no later than December 31, 2022. provides that the report on the potential for carbon capture, utilization, and storage shall provide an assessment of Illinois subsurface storage resources, a description of existing and selected subsurface storage projects, and best practices for carbon storage. Provides that additionally, the report shall provide recommendations for policy and regulatory needs at the State level based on its findings. Provides that in developing the report, the Prairie Research Institute shall form an advisory committee and provides for membership of the committee. Provides that the Prairie Research Institute shall also engage with interested stakeholders throughout the State to gain insights into socio-economic perspectives from environmental justice organizations, environmental non-governmental organizations, industry, landowners, farm bureaus, manufacturing, labor unions, and others.

[HB 731 SA2](#) , **Utility Taxes Statute of Limitations** passed out of the House Revenue Committee on a partisan roll call vote. This bill provides that, for utility taxes, no notice of determination of tax due or assessment may be issued more than 7 years (currently, 4 years) after the end of the calendar year for which the return for the period was filed. Provides that a municipality may annually (currently, every 2 years) request certain information from a utility that the municipality reasonably requires in order to perform an audit. The provisions of this bill were originally present in [SB 1794](#). The Chamber opposes HB 731 as amended. Among other things, we oppose the extension of the statute of limitations to 7 years from the current 4 years for audits of utilities. The Chamber also opposes the portion of the amendment that provides a subsection d-5 that a public utility must reimburse the municipality for the cost of the audit if the utility is determined to be liable for taxes in excess of \$5,000. Also, the Chamber opposes the portion of the amendment that authorizes the imposition of \$1000 per day penalties. The Illinois Chamber slipped in opposition.

[HB 1738](#), **Small Cell Wireless Clerical Changes** passed the House by a vote of 95-15-2 and passed the Senate 53-3-0. This bill, as amended, provides for the reenactment of the Small Wireless Facilities Deployment Act and makes findings concerning the earlier reenactment by Public Act 102-9. Effective immediately. This bill did not make any substantive changes, rather it made changes to drafting errors in [HB 3743](#).

[HB 2908](#), **Elected Chicago School Board** the House concurred by a vote of 70-41-0 and has now passed both chambers. This bill amends the Election Code to provide for the election of the Chicago Board of Education in accordance with specified procedures. Amends the School Code. Provides, on January 15, 2025, for the abolition of the terms of all members of the Chicago Board of Education appointed under specified provisions. Provides for a combination of appointed and elected members and the eventual election of all members. Provides for qualifications of members. Changes eligibility requirements for membership. Specifies the form of nominating petitions for candidates for membership. Changes provisions regarding the appointment of the Inspector General. Adds provisions regarding the creation of districts for election of members and redistricting. Provides that the Chicago Board of Education shall commission an independent review and report of the district's finances. Creates the Chicago Board of Education Diversity Advisory Board and the Chicago Board of Education Non-Citizen Advisory Board. Prohibits the Board from approving any school closings, consolidations, or phase-outs prior to January 15, 2024.

[SB 2800](#), **Budget** amendatory veto was accepted in the House by a vote of 71-44-1 and the Senate by a vote of 36-21-0. This amendatory veto has now been accepted in both chambers. Governor Pritzker referred to the amendatory veto

as necessary to correct a clerical error that omitted a number of effective dates in the budget. Without the veto, much of the funds allocated for the budget could not be used until at least June, 2022.

Chamber Releases End of Session Report

Provided below is the Illinois Chamber's 2021 End of Session Report which was released at the beginning of June. This document details the most significant legislative action of these busy past few months.

Despite present challenges and COVID-19 precautions, the Illinois Chamber had an overall productive session. Each Chamber Council Executive Director has highlighted victories for the business community as well as issues of future concern in their respective policy areas. Click the document below for all the most vital information on the 2021 legislative session.

[Illinois Chamber 2021 End of Session Report](#)

US Senator Duckworth Joins IL Chamber for Quarterly Meeting

Last Friday, The Illinois Chamber held its quarterly meeting with the Energy Council and Environmental Affairs Committee last week to provide timely updates on energy and environmental topics of concern. Guest speaker, United States Senator Tammy Duckworth Spoke of her position on energy policy and environmental topics impacting the business community. Senator Duckworth and Council Members also discussed climate, energy, clean water, and environmental justice. Thank you Senator Duckworth for your participation!

Save the Date: Illinois Chamber to Host Annual Meeting

On Thursday, September 30th the Illinois Chamber will host its Annual Meeting at the Palmer House in Chicago. The event will take place between 11am-1:30 pm and feature keynote speaker Holly Sullivan, Vice President of Worldwide Economic Development for Amazon. The theme for this year's event is Global Growth Opportunities. [Register today!](#)

For more information contact Laurie Silvey at lsilvey@ilchamber.org.



Key Legislation

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