



CONSUMERS ORGANIZED FOR RELIABLE ELECTRICITY

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## **The Illinois Commerce Commission provides a solid foundation for decision-making in the state's electric industry.**

*The Illinois Commerce Commission is charged by law to balance the interests of customers and utilities alike. An independent commission is the appropriate venue for addressing difficult policy questions in a fair and balanced fashion.*

### ➤ **The Commission deliberates all issues in an open and transparent process.**

Under Illinois law, all interested parties have an opportunity to voice their positions to commissioners at the Illinois Commerce Commission. During the Post-2006 Initiative, stakeholders representing views from consumers, power generators, financial intermediaries, utilities, units of government and environmental organizations were brought together to effectively examine Illinois' electric industry. This independent and collaborative process is critical in making policy decisions that will have major impact on residents and businesses across the state.

### ➤ **Why interfere in a process that has worked for almost 100 years?**

The ICC is a quasi-judicial body that was created nearly a century ago to address fundamental policy issues associated with Illinois' most vital utility infrastructure. Illinois should not abandon the commission's long-standing legal process, which is essential to fair and equal treatment for all customers and utilities.

### ➤ **Politicizing the ICC could lead to serious consequences.**

In California, in 2000, officials failed to allow local utilities to enter long-term power purchase contracts. Utilities were forced to buy power on the spot market at a time when the Legislature artificially froze utility rates. The result was utility bankruptcy that required a \$10 billion taxpayer bailout, power disruptions that cost California businesses \$21 billion and an estimated loss of 135,000 jobs ( *San Francisco Chronicle*, "The Energy Crunch," Dec. 2001).

The Illinois Commerce Commission is vital in moving forward with electric restructuring. As long as the energy experts at the ICC remain independent and insulated from political pressures, commissioners can continue to make critical decisions about the future of electricity pricing and delivery in Illinois. The law requires it, and the public relies on them to do so.