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ICC Announces New ARES and AGS Enforcement Team

Chicago, IL- Building on research and analysis from its Office of Retail Market Development, and in response to persistent consumer complaints, the Illinois Commerce Commission announced new strategic planning, including a sharpened focus upon its deployment of Staff resources to bolster enforcement efforts. The Commission also took these steps in light of recently enacted state laws and regulations designed to protect consumers from unfair and deceptive actions by certain alternative retail electric suppliers (ARES) and alternative gas suppliers (AGS) who either directly violate consumer protections or simply fail to properly manage the sales agents they hire to solicit Illinois utility customers.

“Illinois is a restructured state, which means competition among suppliers’ retail products and services is meant to provide solutions and benefits to Illinoisans. One of the ICC’s responsibilities is to ensure that a fair competitive retail energy markets exists. Unfortunately, certain unscrupulous suppliers threaten competition via misleading marketing and by taking advantage of unsuspecting residential and small business customers,” said Chairman Carrie K. Zalewski. “The strategic investment in our legal and consumer advocacy resources is a strong signal to the industry that the ICC will not tolerate bad behavior by their respective companies or their sales agents.”

On January 1, 2020, the Illinois legislature enacted the Home Energy Affordability and Transparency (HEAT) Act, which addresses frequent consumer complaints by putting an end to early termination fees and automatic renewal of contracts. The HEAT Act further provides protections for LIHEAP eligible customers, new bonding and licensing requirements, and strengthens the ICC’s enforcement tools, such as allowing it to order companies found in violation of Illinois laws and rules to adhere to compliance plans designed by the Commission. Additionally, the ICC initiated a rulemaking proceeding to revise Parts 412 and draft Part 512, the rules outlining the obligations of ARES and AGS.

“These new efforts, which include limited but critical additions to our Staff, will help us implement new policy changes, boost our enforcement activity, and complement the ongoing work of our Office of General Counsel, Office of Retail Market Development, and Consumer Services Division,” said ICC Executive Director Christy George.

If you are interested in applying for one of these positions, click [here](#) for job descriptions, experience requirements and information about how to apply.

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