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## ICC Staff Issues Beneficial Electrification Workshops Report

Chicago, IL - The Staff of the Illinois Commerce Commission has issued a Report summarizing the Beneficial Electrification Workshop series held from November 2021-February 2022. Pursuant to requirements of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (“CEJA”) specifically updated provisions to Section 45 of the EV Act, the workshops were held to consider the benefits and barriers of electric vehicle adoption and to solicit input on the design of beneficial electrification programs that Ameren Illinois and ComEd will offer beginning in 2023. The report also includes recommendation for transportation electrification investment or incentives.

“Widespread electric vehicle adoption is key for Illinois to decarbonizing the transportation sector. This report is comprised of input and ideas from a diverse array of stakeholders that will move us closer to the goal of having 1 million EV’s on the road by 2030,” said ICC Chairman Carrie Zalewski.

Shortly after enactment of CEJA in September 2021, the ICC contracted with Celia Johnson Consulting LLC to facilitate the BE workshops. The series was made up of 10 workshops. The workshops typically included over 100 participants, representing a diverse range of stakeholder interests. Two equity-focused workshops were held in the evening, which included over 50 participants each, with significant participation by community-based organizations and members of the public.

Due to the environmental justice and eligible community references throughout the EV Act, ICC Staff included equity considerations at all BE Workshop meetings. Topics of the workshops ranged from an introduction into requirements of the Illinois EV Act, the electrification of private and public fleets, including school buses and public transit, ideas for the development of the utilities BE Plans, residential considerations, charging, equity considerations for EV adoption in low-income neighborhoods and communities negatively impacted by diesel pollution, energy price and costs.

Participants submitted sixty ideas for the utilities to consider in developing their Beneficial Electrification Plans, and throughout the process participants were encouraged to submit written comments responding to the ideas. To highlight just a few recommendations offered by participants, and supported conceptually by the Staff for inclusion in the utilities BE plans are:

- Utilities should not own public charging stations, but should offer technical assistance to public charging stations, and in cases where federal or state public charging station funding is insufficient, offer incentives for public charging stations in environmental justice and eligible communities considered charging deserts, densely populated areas and workplaces, and areas with a high density of multi-unit dwellings;
- Utilities should offer make-ready incentives in their BE Plans.
- The utilities should coordinate with the Illinois Department of Transportation to develop a statewide electric vehicle infrastructure plan to protect public investment, grid resilience and ensuring equitable investment to facilitate access to EVs for all;

- Utilities should provide best practices and technical assistance to local governments related to EVs and charging infrastructure for municipal zoning, permitting, inspections processes, and parking policies;
- Utilities should take into account future state and federal electric vehicle and charging station funding opportunities when designing their BE programs;
- Utilities should include low-cost community charging programs focused in areas where public charging stations options are minimal; or in low-income, environmental justice, or eligible communities;
- Utilities should explore offering medium-and heavy-duty voucher incentives for fleets, with a streamlined application process, and prioritization on vehicles used to travel through low-income, environmental justice and eligible communities;
- To encourage the move to electric school buses, utilities should consider offering rebates to help address the upfront price premium of electric buses and offer rebates for charging infrastructure and provide technical assistance.
- Utilities should pursue vehicle-to-grid (V2G) programs with school districts located in low-income, environmental justice, and eligible communities.
- Utilities should work closely with transit agencies to develop cost-effective solutions to electrify ‘diesel public transportation vehicles’ located in or serving environmental justice, low-income, and eligible communities in order to provide those communities and businesses with greater economic investment, transportation opportunities, and a cleaner environment so they can directly benefit from transportation electrification efforts.
- ComEd should investigate whether transit electric buses could help supply power to the grid in the event of an outage.

“We want to thank everyone who participated in this thought-provoking workshop series. The resulting Staff Report is very informative and will serve as a guide for the Commission when evaluating the cost effectiveness and achievement goals submitted within the utilities BE Plans,” said ICC Commissioner Maria Bocanegra.

Illinois’ EV Act requires Ameren Illinois and ComEd to file Beneficial Electrification Plans with the ICC by July 1, 2022 for beneficial electrification programs starting no later than Jan. 1, 2023. Plans must take into consideration recommendations from the Workshop report. Within 45 days of the Utilities filing their beneficial electrification plans, the Commission must open proceedings to review whether the plans meet the objectives and requirements of the EV Act and determine ‘if the proposed plan are cost beneficial and in the public interest.’”

A final recommendation by the Staff encouraged the Commission to consider creating a beneficial electrification stakeholder advisory group after the utilities beneficial electrification programs begin. The group could share progress and discuss ideas to consider in developing BE Plan updates.

To read the full report and all of the recommendations and written comments by the participants or to watch videos of the workshops, visit the Beneficial Electrification Workshop 2021-20022 webpage [here](#).

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