



Illinois Solar Energy Association

November 13, 2017

SENT VIA EMAIL

Mario Bohorquez
Illinois Power Agency
160 N. LaSalle Street, Suite C-504
Chicago, IL 60601

**ILLINOIS SOLAR ENERGY ASSOCIATION'S COMMENTS ON THE
ILLINOIS POWER AGENCY'S
DRAFT LONG-TERM RENEWABLE RESOURCES PROCUREMENT PLAN**

Dear Mr. Bohorquez,

The Illinois Solar Energy Association (“ISEA”) appreciates the opportunity to respond to the Illinois Power Agency’s (“IPA” or “Agency”) Draft Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan (“LTRRPP” or “Draft Plan”). ISEA represents a diverse membership of over 125 businesses and 400 individual advocates who promote the widespread adoption of solar throughout Illinois. ISEA’s business members widely represent solar industry market segments, including residential, commercial, community, utility-scale solar, module and inverter manufacturers, and solar supply chain retailers. Based upon feedback from its members, ISEA submits recommendations to improve the Draft Plan to meet the intent of Public Act 99-0906 to “encourage... the adoption and deployment of cost-effective distributed energy resource technologies and devices, such as photovoltaics, which can encourage private investment in renewable energy resources, stimulate economic growth, enhance the continued diversification of Illinois’ energy resource mix, and protect the Illinois environment; investment in renewable energy resources, including, but not limited to, photovoltaic distributed generation, which should benefit all citizens of the State, including low-income households.”¹

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Draft Plan and look forward to working with the Agency to develop a robust solar market in Illinois.

¹ P.A. 99-0906, § 1(a)(1). In the legislative findings of P.A. 99-0906, the General Assembly also specifically found that “low-income customers should be included within the State’s efforts to expand the use of distributed generation technologies and devices.” P.A. 99-0906, § 1(b).



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INTRODUCTION

ISEA commends the IPA for its thoughtful approach in constructing the Draft LTRRPP. ISEA applauds the IPA's diligence in evaluating best-practices in other solar markets for adoption in Illinois. ISEA's comments focus largely on ensuring the solar programs in the Draft Plan, such as the Adjustable Block Program (ABP), are designed to meet the ambitious solar goals within Public Act 99-0906, in a cost-effective manner that support the growth of diverse solar projects, while protecting consumers and providing economic and environmental benefits to the citizens of Illinois.

ISEA members worked with the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) on its comments, and co-submitted separate comments on the REC model with SEIA and the Coalition for Community Solar Access (CCSA). For comments on the overall Draft Plan, ISEA agrees with much of what is included in SEIA's comments; however, ISEA has a broader membership than SEIA, and there are some areas where ISEA holds exception, and other areas where ISEA has additions, to SEIA's comments. At the beginning of this document ISEA references all the sections in SEIA's comments where ISEA is in agreement. The remainder of the document is focused on providing exceptions to those agreements, as well as additions to the areas agreement.

The most important issues specific to ISEA members relate to ensuring efficient LTRRPP programs, which reduce barriers to entry and installation soft costs, while maintaining strict requirements for acceptance into the ABP, with the ultimate goal of maintaining high project completion rates and performance. ISEA members also value the IPA's intent to allow in the LTRRPP the necessary flexibility to make program adjustments as the solar market ramps up quickly in Illinois, Solar Investment Tax Credit ramps down, and a possible tariff on foreign photovoltaic modules and cells is considered. ISEA appreciates IPA efforts to ensure the solar industry protects consumer rights and that individuals in all parts of the state have equal access to LTRRPP programs and funding.

AREAS OF AGREEMENT WITH SOLAR ENERGY INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION

ISEA agrees in total with SEIA's comments and suggested language changes in the following Sections:

- Section 1.1. Changing the RPS Framework
- Section 2. Legislative/Regulatory Requirements of the Plan
- Section 2.2.5.1. Section 16-111.5(b) Requirements
- Section 2.2.5.2. Section 1-75(c) Requirements
- Section 2.2.8. Plan Updates
- Section 2.3.2. Eligible Projects for the RPS
- Section 2.3.4. RPS Funding and Rate Impact Cap
- Section 2.4.1. Quantitative Procurement Requirements
- Section 2.4.5. Balancing Expected Wind RECs vs. Solar RECs
- Section 2.5.1 Adjustable Block Program
- Section 2.5.1.2. Adjustable Block Program - Contracts
- Section 2.5.1.3. Adjustable Block Program - Changes
- Section 2.5.2. Community Renewable Generation Program



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- Section 3. RPS Targets and Budgets, as well as all comments in sub-Sections under this Section
 - Section 5. Competitive Procurement Schedule
 - Section 6.2.1. Managing Initial Demand
 - Section 6.3. Block Structure
 - Section 6.3.1. Transition Between Blocks
 - Section 6.5.2. Community Solar Adder
 - Section 6.5.3. Adders to Adjust for Changing System Revenue
 - Section 6.6. Payment Terms
 - Section 6.7. Contract Terms
 - Section 6.8. Adjustments to Blocks and Prices
 - Section 6.8.1. NEM Cap
 - Section 6.8.2. Smart Inverter Rebate
 - Section 6.10. Program Administrator
 - Section 6.11. Program Launch
 - Section 6.12.2. Metering Requirements
 - Section 6.14.1. Batches
 - Section 6.14.3. Batch Size
 - Section 6.14.6. Batch Control Approval
 - Section 6.15.1. Development Time Allowed
 - Section 6.15.2. Extensions
 - Section 6.15.4. Additional Requirements for Community Solar Projects
 - Section 6.15.5. REC Delivery
 - Section 6.16. Ongoing Performance Requirements
 - Section 6.17. Annual Report
 - Section 7.2. Eligible Generating Technologies and Procurement/Program Eligibility
 - Section 7.5. Types of Community Renewable Generation Projects
 - Section 7.6. Subscriber Requirements
 - Section 7.6.2. Residential Subscribers
 - Section 7.6.3. Marketing Claims Related to the Ownership of RECs and Community Renewable Generation Subscriptions
 - Section 7.7. Utility Responsibilities

AREAS WHERE ISEA HAS EXCEPTIONS OR ADDITIONS TO THE SOLAR ENERGY INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION’S COMMENTS

2.5.1.1. ADJUSTABLE BLOCK PROGRAM—PROJECTS

ISEA agrees with the comments and language changes in SEIA’s comments and offers one addition. ISEA believes that the IPA should clarify that solar DG and community solar projects within university utility territories are eligible to participate in the ABP.

The IPA outlines two project types eligible for the ABP: photovoltaic distributed renewable energy generation devices and photovoltaic community renewable generation projects. Under Illinois law, photovoltaic distributed renewable energy generation projects must be “...interconnected at the distribution system level of either an electric utility as defined in this Section, a municipal utility as defined in this Section that owns or operates electric distribution facilities, or a rural electric cooperative as defined in Section 3-119 of the Public Utilities Act (and thus, must be located in Illinois to be interconnected to such an entity);...” ISEA seeks clarification that projects in university utilities’ territories are eligible to participate in the ABP as they are included under the Illinois Electric Suppliers Act as an “electric cooperative.” This may be accomplished through a footnote.



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ISEA recommends that the IPA add the following sentence as a footnote to item (2) on the two itemized lists on page 31:

IPA notes that per the Illinois Electric Suppliers Act, a university-owned utility is considered a rural electric cooperative, and thus projects located on such systems are eligible to participate in the Adjustable Block Program.

2.6.1. ILLINOIS SOLAR FOR ALL

ISEA members have participated on sub-teams within the Illinois Solar for All Working Group which began in January 2017, following the passage of the Future Energy Jobs Act and supports the core purpose of the Illinois Solar for All Program, which is to incent low-income participation in solar photovoltaic projects. ISEA further supports the following Illinois Solar for All Program principles adopted by the working group to ensure high-quality implementation of the program for all Illinois communities: Affordability and Accessibility, Community Engagement, Sustainability and Flexibility, as well as Compatibility and Integration. ISEA agrees with the Working Group that “Communities throughout Illinois need the opportunities and services the Illinois Solar for All Program will provide and the support of groups with substantive experience in the solar industry and low-income solar in particular.” ISEA member companies will continue to engage with the ISFA Working Group to help bring best practices to the Illinois economically disadvantaged households and communities that the Illinois Solar for All Program is intended to serve.

6.5.1. SIZE CATEGORY ADJUSTMENTS

ISEA has a differing opinion from SEIA on the size categories suggested its comments and offers an alternate approach. ISEA believes that there should be a separate size adder for systems 10-25 kW to foster the market for large residential distributed generation, and believes that an adder in the Large Block Category will not adequately foster this market segment.

For example, the size of average residential solar installations in Massachusetts has gone from 4.1 kW to 7.4 kW between 2008 and 2015. We anticipate this trend will be replicated in Illinois for two reasons. First, as installation pricing has fallen, homeowners have purchased larger arrays, offsetting greater portions of their annual electrical needs. Secondly, as panel manufacturing has advanced, the output of a single module has increased by 70% since 2007 while maintaining the same footprint. Commonly, modules in 2007 produced 170-200 watts/panel whereas panels in 2017 typically range from 300-330 watts/panel. With continued R&D this is expected to continue to improve. Further, limiting consideration of residential systems to only <10kW will limit opportunities for rural and downstate participation. Typically, system sizes are larger for farms or more rural homes because of electrical needs or the opportunity to install larger arrays. In fact, IPA recognized the goal to encourage projects in diverse locations, but did not propose specific geographic adders. This additional, larger residential size category would help address this goal without contemplating an adder. Therefore, ISEA advocates for the inclusion of a second “small” category for systems between 10 kW to 25 kW.

REC pricing within this category should not decrease by the 26% currently reflected in Table 6-2.



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Although there are economies of scale as system sizes increase, these are not as beneficial in a residential 20kW system as they will be for a 100kW commercial system. Recognizing that a great deal of analysis has gone into the remaining Large Block Categories, ISEA suggests that a new category be added by splitting the 10kW – 100 kW category into a 10 – 25 kW & 25 kW – 100 kW, adding a separate adder but not necessarily identifying separate capacity targets. ISEA made suggestions, along with SEIA and CCSA, in separate comments on the REC model, and we suggest the IPA reevaluate the adders with suggestions from those comments at this system size.

ISEA also believes that the IPA should clarify that only distributed generation systems or, separately, only community solar systems on the same property will be aggregated for REC pricing purposes, taking into consideration co-location allowances for community solar. There is a significant likelihood that a property may install a rooftop system, and separately may host a community solar project where the property owner may or may not be a subscriber. The plan should make clear that this arrangement is allowed, and that the projects are considered separate for REC pricing purposes. The two types of project are distinguished by interconnection: one is behind the customer’s meter, the other may be on the customer’s premises but is interconnected in front of the meter. The two types of projects fulfill different purposes and will provide different benefits to customers. ComEd’s tariffs for community solar (Rider POGCS) and net metering (Rider POGNM), as well as Ameren’s tariffs, are not mutually exclusive, so the Draft Plan should align with the approved tariffs.

ISEA recommends the following changes beginning on page 100:

Please note that the values in this table are not adjusted. Rather, we recommend that the IPA reevaluate these adders using the comments that ISEA, CCSA and SEIA previously provided, to develop new adders.

Table 6-3: Size Category Adjustment Adders

Size	\$/REC
Over 10 kW to 25 100 kW	\$28.50
<u>Over 25 kW to 100 kW</u>	\$XX
Over 100 kW to 200 kW	\$8.00
Over 200 kW to 500 kW	\$2.50
Over 500 kW to 2000 kW	No adder

The total capacity of distributed generation systems, or separately of community solar systems, of a system at a customer’s location will be considered a single system. (For example, three 100 kW distributed generation systems at a single location will be considered a 300 kW system.)



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A 100 kW distributed generation system and a 500 kW community solar system at a single location will be considered separately.) If a system at a single location is subsequently expanded, the Agency reserves the right to revise the incentive amounts paid for the original system, and to set new incentives based on the total expanded system size rather than to treat the expansion as a separate system. For the purpose of establishing an incentive level, a system's location would be a single building (regardless of the number of utility accounts at the location) for rooftop installations, and a single property parcel for ground-mounted systems (if a property had both rooftop and ground-mounted distributed generation, or separately community solar, systems, it will be considered a single system). Exceptions will be made if it can be demonstrated that two projects on one roof serve to offset the load of separate occupants (residential or commercial) of a building, such as duplexes. Additional exceptions will be considered for agricultural producers that have multiple meters at the same location.

Additional discussion of co-location of community solar projects is included in Section 7.3.

6.8.3. FEDERAL SOLAR INVESTMENT TAX CREDIT

ISEA supports SEIA's comments on this Section and adds thoughts for the IPA to consider. ISEA appreciates IPA recognition that the ITC ramp-down will impact pricing in Illinois and an adder may be needed and adjusted appropriately. ISEA also encourages IPA to act on adjustment if it appears the ITC will be eliminated or reduced further through congressional action.

6.8.4. TARIFFS ON FOREIGN PHOTOVOLTAIC MODULES AND CELLS

ISEA supports SEIA's comments on this Section and adds additional thoughts for the IPA to consider. ISEA recognizes the uncertainty of the tariff and the remedy imposed. As no one can predict what the Administration will do on this issue, ISEA recommends that following that decision, the IPA convene a small group of solar industry stakeholders, representing all sectors of the industry, to explore the impacts of that decision and possible adjustments needed for ABP.

6.9. APPROVED VENDORS

ISEA supports SEIA's comments and recommendations in this Section, in particular the comments regarding the IPA's ability to review and change marketing materials. However, ISEA has a few additions, outlined below.

ISEA supports the IPA's decision to not restrict the entity types that can be eligible to be an Approved Vendor in order to support diverse business models, as well as the IPA's intent to ensure only good actors are allowed to participate in the market place. ISEA also agrees with the IPA's model to use Approved Vendors to submit batches of projects, and agrees that Approved Vendors, including aggregators, should meet specific qualification requirements for consumer protection purposes. Furthermore, ISEA supports and endorses the following from Section 6.13. "Requiring clear and consistent information on the relationship between the end customer, the installer/developer, and the Approved Vendor is critical to ensuring that the fiscal risks and controls of this program are properly and prudently managed." The distinction drawn in this section between



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developer/installer and Approved Vendor is a critical one, and ISEA recommends that the IPA allow for some of the roles and responsibilities of the Approved Vendor as proposed in the Draft Plan to be reallocated as outlined below.

These distinct roles are especially important for smaller installers and non-vertically integrated companies. For instance, when an installer uses a REC aggregator to manage their customers' systems' RECs, that aggregator is not involved in the building of the system, and the aggregator does not have the ability to ensure the warranty on the physical system over the lifetime of the contract.

Current Roles of Approved Vendor

1. REC Delivery Responsibilities:
 - a. Sign REC Contract
 - b. Register systems in tracking registries
 - c. Delivery RECs
 - d. Submit Annual Reports
 - e. Collect and pay fees to get into ABI
2. Disclose to the Agency names and other information on installers and projects, while otherwise maintaining confidentiality of information.
3. Post and maintain collateral
4. Installation Marketing and Quality:
 - a. Document that all installers and other subcontractors comply with applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations, including for example, maintaining Distributed Generation Installer Certification.
 - b. Provide samples of any marketing materials or content used by the Approved Vendor, and/or their subcontractors/installers and affiliates, to the Agency for review, as requested.

ISEA's Recommended Split:

Approved REC Vendor

1. REC Delivery Responsibilities:
 - a. Sign REC Contract
 - b. Register systems in tracking registries
 - c. Delivery RECs
 - d. Submit Annual Reports
 - e. Collect and pay fees to get into ABI
2. Disclose to the Agency names and other information on installers and projects, while otherwise maintaining confidentiality of information.
3. Facilitate the transfer of documents from installer/developer to Program Administrator.



Installer/Developer

1. Installation Marketing and Quality:
 - a. Document that all installers and other subcontractors comply with applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations, including for example, maintaining Distributed Generation Installer Certification
 - b. Provide samples of any marketing materials or content used by the Approved Vendor, and/or their subcontractors/installers and affiliates, to the Agency for review, as requested.
 - c. Provide warranty and ensure performance of system

System Owner

1. Submit Meter Readings via the Approved Vendor
2. Maintain regular operation of system and perform maintenance not due to faulty equipment or installation; seek and pay for repair of system when in disrepair in a timely fashion
3. Failure to comply with #1 or 2 would result in the loss of collateral and refund of previously paid REC funds.

With respect to ISEA's proposed division of responsibilities and roles between and among Approved Vendors (aggregators), installers and developers, and project owners, ISEA encourages the IPA to ensure that the designation of parties in the Plan does not result in increased paperwork in the application process (such as requiring documents to be completed and/or signed by individual project owners, or by installers or developers as part of the application process).

Each of these responsibilities should be clearly outlined in the REC agreements with party roles, responsibilities and penalties clearly defined.

6.12.1. TECHNICAL SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

ISEA supports the comments and language suggestions in SEIA's comments, and in particular we support adding a definition to "non-ministerial permits." ISEA respectfully submits the following additions.

ISEA generally supports the technical system and metering requirements as outlined by the IPA. ISEA fully supports the notion that there needs to be strict requirements for acceptance into a block, to ensure a high completion rate of approved system. However, there are some requirements listed in the IPA's Draft Plan that increase the administrative load of the process and the installation soft costs without increasing the likelihood that the system will be installed. ISEA recommends the following revisions to standardize the application process, minimize the documentation required, and allow for consistency in application processing for all systems under 25kW. Furthermore, the Program Administrator will benefit from standardized input fields for these technical system requirements in order to maximize processing efficiency.

Language Changes beginning on Page 110:

The application process is described in more detail in Section 6.14. In this Section the Agency outlines what technical information will have to be submitted for each project. These standards apply for both distributed generation and community solar projects.



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The technical system requirements are:

- Information about the system location, and size, including but not limited to:
 - ~~Single line or three line diagrams~~
 - A description of the technical specifications of the main system components, including the make, and model, manufacturer, number (quantity) of panels, and inverters and meters, array location (roof or ground mount), tilt, orientation, and shading percentage.
 - ~~Site map or other project details~~
- Proof of site control and/or host acknowledgement
- Project-specific estimate of annual production during the 15-year contract term using PV Watts or a similar tool
- For systems over 25 kW, a signed Interconnection Agreement
- For systems over 25 kW, evidence of having obtained all non-ministerial permits.
- ~~Shading study~~

For systems that have been energized prior to application, the following information will also be required:

- GATS or M-RETS ~~approval including unit ID~~
- Certificate of Completion of Interconnection or comparable document
- ~~Net metering application approval letter (if applicable)~~
- Photographic documentation of the installation

6.13. CUSTOMER INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS/CONSUMER PROTECTIONS

ISEA supports SEIA's recommended language changes and respectfully submits additional comments for the IPA's consideration.

ISEA actively advocates for ensuring consumers have fair, quality information to make decisions. However, ISEA encourages adoption of consumer protection elements that are mindful of existing law and do not create potentially duplicative or conflicting requirements for solar companies. Unnecessary or duplicative paperwork adds to the soft cost of projects.

ISEA proposes the following recommendations:

- Disclosure Forms: ISEA does not believe that Vendors should be required to provide sales volume numbers as a separate reporting. Vendors are already required to provide an annual portfolio report, with that information included.
- Brochure: ISEA recommends that all residential system owners receive the IL Attorney General's published Consumer Protection Brochure. This document was originally developed for home repair, but it generally informs consumers of their rights as they relate to all home improvement.
<http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/consumers/homerep0505c.pdf>



6.14.5. CONVERTING SYSTEM SIZE INTO REC QUANTITIES

ISEA supports the comments and language changes in SEIA's comments and offers the following additional input.

The IPA indicates that it will base actual REC volumes for a system on a standard capacity factor as described in this Section. As SEIA points out, and ISEA agrees, a standard capacity factor should not be used to determine REC production on each individual project. This one-size-fits all approach to using one capacity factor does not contemplate the diversity in projects in distributed generation, including geography, tilt, orientation racking and obstacles that produce shading. Alternatively, ISEA suggests that each project submits an estimate of annual production using PV Watts, and that the REC volumes contracted for each project are based on this PV Watts analysis. This allows for diversity in projects, and importantly more accurately reflects RECs being produced. Without using a project-specific production amount backed by a proven tool such as PV Watts, every system will under produce RECs, leaving Vendors responsible for that underproduction.

ISEA recognizes the Agency's decision to require meter reads for projects of all sizes and not allow for production estimates; however, ISEA again proposes and recommends IPA consider allowing the use of production estimates for small systems sizes. In the interest of minimizing the burden on all stakeholders and in maximizing the number of RECs produced and delivered (that is, not requiring frequent manual reporting from all systems), ISEA recommends the following reporting requirements:

The IPA should consider allowing systems 25 kW and under to report via estimates and only require that a reading be submitted yearly to ensure the actual production is in line with the estimates. Other state programs, such as DC and Maryland, allow for small projects under 10kW to produce RECs based on estimates, and the IPA would ensure actual production by requiring an annual reading.

6.15.3. PROJECT COMPLETION AND ENERGIZATION

ISEA agrees with the comments and language suggestions in SEIA's comments and offers the following additional comment.

With regards to systems under 100 kW, the IPA should not require status updates every six months. ISEA believes this will be burdensome for residential installs and add to the soft costs of the projects.

Language changes beginning on page 117:

The Approved Vendor will provide the Agency an update on each project that is under development but not yet energized at least every six months and will inform the Agency of any significant changes to the system. Systems under 100 kW are exempt from this requirement. For community solar projects, the update will include information on the status of acquiring subscribers.



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6.16.1. CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

ISEA supports the comments and language suggestions in SEIA's comments, and offers the following additional comments.

The credit requirement section outlines a situation where collateral could be drawn on indefinitely for an underperforming portfolio. We find this to be an extremely excessive penalty and difficult stipulation to meet. This places undue burden on Vendors that will be very difficult for them to mitigate. This unending collateral requirement also creates extra risk and difficulty with system financing. ISEA suggests that this language be deleted and that the collateral collected should be considered sufficient.

Language Changes beginning on 120:

~~Nonetheless, an Approved Vendor will be responsible for delivering the RECs under its contracts (subject to the reduction options described in the following Section). Failure to deliver RECs will result in the utility drawing on the collateral to be compensated for undelivered RECs that were paid for. After any such drawing the Approved Vendor will need to increase its collateral to bring it back up to the 10% of remaining value within 90 days. If the amount of collateral is insufficient to compensate the utility, the Approved Vendor will be required to make an additional payment to the utility for the remaining balance. Failure to make payment and/or maintain the collateral requirement will result in the Approved Vendor's suspension from participating in the Program.~~

6.16.2 OPTIONS TO REDUCE REC DELIVERIES

As mentioned in Section 6.14.5, ISEA urges the IPA to allow PV Watts to be utilized to determine accurate REC obligations based on installation parameters, thereby ensuring accurate estimations for REC deliveries and reducing the instances for reductions.

Additionally, ISEA thanks the IPA for seeking comments on what additional circumstances may develop force majeure. For residential systems, force majeure may be multifaceted where the system owner would typically be a homeowner who may pass away, suffer foreclosure, or potentially there may be contract disputes between the vendor, system owner, and when applicable the homeowner or customer, that results in suspension and potentially termination of a contract after commissioning of the system. Contract violations or terminations can include the relocation of the system by a homeowner without consent, sale of the home, or refusal of payment. For contract terminations or violations, it is reasonable for the IPA to not automatically rule force majeure and as suggested, the IPA should review and scrutinize whether the system does in fact meet its force majeure requirements.

With the request to allow the IPA to review petitions of force majeure that may include potential contract terminations or violations, vendors and system owners alike should do all they can to ensure compliance of the program and meet the agreed upon REC deliveries with the utility. ISEA sees the circumstance of claiming a force majeure on a contract should not automatically enable a vendor's ability to reduce their REC deliveries. Additionally, ISEA foresees very few instances where this formal request may occur as it is in



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every party's interest to maintain compliance with the program. Therefore, ISEA suggests allowing force majeure petitions to be reviewed by the IPA that may not be explicitly identified in the program. The IPA will also have the right to define what may not be considered force majeure in its program reviews.

7.3. CO-LOCATION OF PROJECTS and 7.3.1. CO-LOCATION STANDARD

ISEA supports the comments and language suggestions in SEIA's comments and suggests the following additional comment for consideration.

ISEA's majority position on the issue of co-location is in favor of supporting SEIAs comments and suggestions. There is a lesser portion of the ISEA membership that is in favor of supporting the IPA's original position on co-location in the draft plan.

With regards to ISEA members that service agricultural producers, ISEA requests that it be clearly stated that separate parcels of land with separate meters should be considered independent distributed generation systems for REC pricing purposes even if the ownership of those parcels is the same and the parcels are contiguous.

For Example: Smith Farms owns 2,000 acres in Southern Illinois over several separate, but contiguous, parcels. On one parcel, they have a hog farm. Three miles away there is a cattle operation. The family residence/barns are located on yet another parcel, and across the County Road from the family residence are the grain drying bins. All are on separate meters with the local rural electric cooperative under the name Smith Farms. To avoid market confusion, we are recommending that the co-location language specifically allow opportunities for agricultural producers to submit separate applications for separate distributed generation systems located on different parcels/profit centers that are metered independently, and not have the capacity of those systems be combined for REC pricing purposes, even if they are titled in the same name.

7.4. ELIGIBILITY OF PROJECTS LOCATED IN RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES AND MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

ISEA supports the comments and language suggestions in SEIA's comments, and offers the following additional comments.

While ISEA understands that neither the IPA nor the ICC has regulatory authority over the rural electric cooperatives and municipal utilities, ISEA is concerned that these entities may take advantage of the funding under this LTRRPP at the cost of those they serve. These utilities typically have small net metering caps, and there is concern that the capacity of those caps will be filled by projects owned by the utility, thereby restricting distributed generation opportunities for members.

ISEA does not believe this to be the intent of the law and consequently believes that the IPA should add additional language to ensure that municipal utilities and rural electric coops do not use funding to build their own systems thereby either intentionally or unintentionally monopolizing/controlling solar development in their service territories. While the IPA may ultimately have little control over this, one suggestion is to clarify that distributed generation systems that by law, need to be "located on the customer's side of the electric



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meter” and “primarily used to offset that customer’s electric load” refers to systems that are behind a retail customer’s electric meter.

8.6.3. INCENTIVES FOR NON-PROFITS AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

ISEA supports the Illinois Solar For All Working Group’s position that, to meet the legislative intent of this program, non-profit and public facilities should, in some manner, serve low-income communities. The proposed considerations provide some guidelines on how the IPA can identify whether entities are serving low-income community members. ISEA also makes suggestions for adjusting or adapting the definition if uptake is low.

- The non-profits and public-sector customers that in some manner serve low-income communities should be given specific consideration given the objective of the Illinois Solar for All Program is in part, “to bring photovoltaics to low income communities.”
- Eligible non-profits and public facilities are organizations that act as critical service providers (e.g. youth centers, hospitals, schools, homeless shelters, senior centers, community centers, places of worship, affordable housing providers including public housing sites) and/or serve at-risk or low-income individuals, families, and communities, including environmental justice and historically underserved communities, in their missions. If applicable, those organizations should seek to provide and allocate the benefits of locally generated solar energy to income-eligible households.
- Government, non-profit, and tax-exempt entities, including those with IRS 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4) determinations, should be required to submit verification of their tax-exempt status to be eligible for the public facilities and non-profit incentives.
- Any non-profit or public facility must meet the standards described in Section 8.11 related to projects having sufficient connection to, and input from, low-income community members.
- The Program Administrator(s) for Solar for All should work with the Agency and community stakeholders to adjust or adapt the definition of eligibility if program uptake is low or otherwise difficult by the time of the first independent evaluation. The Program Administrator(s) and / or the Agency may consider additional public facilities and community stakeholders should suggest additional public or non-profit facilities that directly serve low-income communities in ways beyond those explicitly specified".

CONCLUSION

ISEA appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Draft Plan and commends the IPA on its continued work to ensure a strong solar market in Illinois.

Respectfully submitted,

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