



**To:** The Illinois Power Agency

**From:** Brad Tietz, Vice President of Government Relations & Strategy, Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce

**Re:** Illinois Power Agency Draft Policy Study

I'm writing to express the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce's support for HB 2132, which makes way for the creation of an offshore wind pilot project in Lake Michigan. This pilot project offers a unique opportunity for economic development in our state, coupled with a commitment to equity and inclusion in job creation.

The Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce represents over 1,000 businesses across Chicago, Cook and the Collar Counties and is dedicated to fostering a favorable business climate, encouraging investment, and supporting policies that benefit the broad business community in Chicago and its surrounding areas. We play a vital role in the local economy, offering resources, education, and advocacy to help businesses thrive in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

The creation of an offshore wind pilot project can lead to hundreds of millions of dollars in economic growth, which is directly in line with our commitment to supporting the economic growth and development of the Chicago region.

HB 2132 includes provisions to ensure that Black and brown communities benefit from the jobs offshore wind will create, ensuring that these communities that have historically been victims of environmental injustice and disinvestment have access to good-paying jobs in our green economy.

Offshore wind provides a consistent and sustainable source of power that can help balance our energy mix, contributing to a more resilient infrastructure, particularly, at a time when we desperately need to scale and expedite renewable generation projects across Illinois and PJM reports note that Illinois is set to face an energy imbalance in the coming years. This grid reliability can help attract investment from across the globe and expand our supply chain here in Illinois, further diversifying our economy and enhancing our competitiveness.

Lastly, HB 2132 would establish Illinois and Chicago as the leader in the Great Lakes offshore wind industry leading to potentially significant benefits in the years to come that are currently unforeseen. Illinois is determined to be a national leader in the transition to our green economy, and, we are fortunate to have world-class competitive advantages like Lake Michigan to make this goal a reality.

An offshore wind project, like the one outlined in HB 2132, is a strategic investment in our region and state's future. The Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce urges the Illinois Power Agency to consider the project proposed in HB 2132 in conjunction with Illinois' larger push towards our green and decarbonized economy and to support policies that facilitate the growth of the offshore wind industry in Lake Michigan.