



# Iron Workers District Council of Chicago and Vicinity

International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental & Reinforcing Iron Workers  
2700 South River Road, Suite 118 • Des Plaines, IL 60018 • Tel. 847.795.1710 • Fax 847.795.1713

[jgardiner@iwintl.org](mailto:jgardiner@iwintl.org) • [www.iwdcchi.org](http://www.iwdcchi.org)



James M. Gardiner  
President

February 12, 2024

Robert Boskovich  
P Emeritus

Illinois Power Agency  
105 W. Madison Street, Suite 1401  
Chicago, IL 60602

Paul Thompson  
FST/RS

Craig Satalic  
First Vice-President

Subject: Formal Comments on Draft of "Illinois Power Agency 2024 Policy Study"

Robert Fulton  
Second Vice-President

To the Illinois Power Agency,

Brian Atkins  
Trustee

The Iron Workers District Council of Chicago & Vicinity represents highly skilled professionals dedicated to the safe, efficient, and timely construction of vital infrastructure across the state of Illinois. We commend the Illinois Power Agency (IPA) for the release of the draft "Illinois Power Agency 2024 Policy Study" and appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on this important document.

Ron Ware  
Trustee

Kevin Hray  
Trustee

Mark Richeson  
Sergeant at Arms

We fully support the IPA's efforts to explore ways to meet Illinois' ambitious renewable energy goals, and believe offshore wind power has a crucial role to play. Our members have played a central role in constructing successful offshore wind projects throughout the United States, and we stand ready to bring our extensive experience to bear on any future projects in the Illinois waters of Lake Michigan.

We would like to offer the following recommendations and points for consideration to further strengthen the IPA's study:

**1. Prospective Cost Analysis and Scalable Benefits:** We urge the IPA to provide a more in-depth analysis of how cost projections could be influenced by a variety of factors, such as the selection of fixed-bottom or floating wind turbine technologies. Furthermore, we encourage the IPA to examine scenarios beyond a pilot program and offer forecasts of economic impact and renewable energy generation at different scales of offshore wind development. This detailed information will better guide decision-makers and stakeholders as they plan future initiatives that aim to meet Illinois' renewable energy targets.

**2. Comparative Review of Offshore Wind Technologies:** To create a comprehensive study, we suggest the IPA include a fair and balanced comparison of the various offshore wind technologies available. This information will aid stakeholders in weighing the environmental implications, energy output potential, and long-term costs of different approaches, providing a well-rounded framework for evaluating all feasible options.

**3. Unwavering Support for Offshore Wind Development:** The Iron Workers District Council of Chicago & Vicinity unequivocally supports the pursuit of offshore wind in the Illinois waters of Lake Michigan. We believe this initiative is a necessary step towards a cleaner energy future and can contribute significantly to achieving the goals outlined in the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA). While offshore wind alone will not guarantee the accomplishment of CEJA, it will be instrumental in moving Illinois towards its long-term objectives.

**4. Energy Storage and Transmission Line Impact:** While we commend the IPA's initial findings on offshore wind, we advocate for a careful review of the energy storage development projections and the SOO Green HVDC Transmission line project. Given the absence of specific data on potential job creation, we would advise the IPA to focus greater attention on the construction employment effects of the HVDC Transmission line project. Please provide clarity on the number of jobs envisioned, the particular trades required, and the overall economic impact on the construction industry. This data-driven analysis will not only strengthen the document but increase its credibility with industry stakeholders, policymakers, and the working women and men in Illinois' building and construction trades.

We would be pleased to collaborate with the IPA as you undertake this important research. The Iron Workers District Council of Chicago & Vicinity is a committed partner in fostering sustainable economic development that creates rewarding employment opportunities in the renewable energy sector.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

James M. Gardiner  
President  
Iron Workers District Council of Chicago & Vicinity