

**COMMENTS OF THE ILLINOIS COMPETITIVE ENERGY ASSOCIATION IN
RESPONSE TO INTEGRATED RESOURCE PLAN REQUEST FOR COMMENTS SET 2**

May 14, 2026

The Illinois Competitive Energy Association (“ICEA”), a trade association representing leading competitive retail suppliers of electricity and natural gas, appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback to follow up on the May 5, 2026 stakeholder session and the initial set of requests for comments.

As ICEA noted in its April 28, 2026 comments, ICEA members that provide electric supply themselves or through affiliates own, operate, and contract for generation—including large portfolios of renewable generation, renewables paired with storage, and stand-alone storage of all sizes—as part of providing Illinois customers with competitive supply service. This is a core function of ARES in support of their operational obligations to procure wholesale components (energy, capacity, ancillaries) on behalf of their customers.

Alternative retail electric suppliers including ICEA members serve majorities—in some cases substantial majorities—of nearly all non-residential customer classes and about half of residential customers in Ameren. A wide range of businesses, hospitals, governments, manufacturers, and residents (both through municipal aggregation and individual switching) rely on ARES for supply. Any implementation of Section 16-111.5(b-10) should not upend the benefits customers of all shapes and sizes seek when they choose an ARES.

Question 1: What guidelines should govern the design and use of this new procurement mechanism to balance the priorities and needs identified by the state agencies with the ongoing functioning of the regional markets (including the PJM and MISO capacity markets) and Illinois’s competitive retail market structure?

ICEA RESPONSE: As ICEA explained in their April 28, 2026 comments, the goal of Section 16-111.5(b-10) is procurement of new renewable and new storage assets to address “the potential need to facilitate additional supply to address any resource adequacy challenges through a stable and competitively neutral cost allocation mechanism” The goal is meeting the resource adequacy challenge, not the IPA procurement itself. The statute must be read in a way that allows the best chance of achieving the goal—not just to satisfy a particular process.

Competitive neutrality requires that each load-serving entity to have procurement opportunities otherwise available under law. For electric utilities, the IPA is the exclusive procurement channel for energy, capacity, and other wholesale products on behalf of utility-served retail customers other than balancing in hourly markets. For ARES, while IPA procurements are an option, ARES have historically self-procured energy, capacity, and other wholesale products used to serve retail customers. Costs cannot be allocated properly if ARES are procuring products and services in support of the resource adequacy goal but their customers do not receive the benefit of those procurements.

In addition, in order to preserve competitive neutrality to the extent that the IPA is procuring on behalf of customers of an ARES that does not meet or exceed their resource adequacy requirements with commitments to new renewable and storage assets, IPA procurement of wholesale components on behalf of members of the competitive retail market also raises compliance concerns. For instance, if ARES customers are paying for energy, capacity, or other wholesale products, ARES should then be provided their proportionate share of those products to serve their retail customers. Otherwise, if the utilities simply take those wholesale products, ARES customers will be paying for products that they are not benefitting from, creating a cross-subsidy in favor of utility customers to the detriment of ARES customers.

Thus, in order to respect the structure of the competitive retail market, the procurement must allow for ARES to take title to the energy/capacity/other product benefits in proportionate share to their customers, in the form and manner allowed by the respective RTO. However, an ARES must be able to self-procure new renewable and storage assets (including distributed storage) to meet the goal independently.

Question 2: How should the need or procurement target of eligible resources or products be determined (i.e. stemming from need identified in IRP process or mitigation plan)?

ICEA RESPONSE: ICEA does not take a position on resource mix although ICEA does note that that if the goal is resource adequacy, the IPA procurement—and assessment of ARES self-procurement—will have to be defined in terms of achievement of that goal. ICEA does not have a proposal for how to do so but recommends that the IPA develop through the planning process a methodology that provides transparency to market participants.

Questions 3: How frequently should these procurements be conducted and what would trigger and justify a procurement event?

ICEA RESPONSE: ICEA takes no position on frequency or triggers.

Question 4: How should the resources or products be evaluated in isolation and against one another to meet the need or procurement target described above? Respondents may consider differences in resource type, cost, contract length, or commercial operation date.

ICEA RESPONSE: ICEA takes no position, other than the first procurement should have a deadline for ARES to demonstrate that new renewable or storage (including distributed storage) owned or contracted by the ARES are under development so that particular share of ARES load can be removed from the procurement.

Question 5: Should there be any cost caps or other guardrails on the procurements to protect Illinois customers from increased rates? If so, please describe.

ICEA RESPONSE: ICEA takes no position on customer rate impact, particularly to the extent that the Commission allows ARES to self-procure in whole or in part for their

customers (instead of that ARES's customers paying for the IRP procurements) and thus such ARES's customers would be less impacted or unimpacted. However, ICEA does note that to the extent there are "cost caps or guardrails," it appears that either bids will be limited on the front end or the IPA is considering a mechanism whereby contract payments can be reduced. Some renewable or storage developers may prefer to contract with a private counterparty such as ARES outside of the IRP to avoid such terms and conditions.