



Rockford Area
Habitat
for Humanity®

Illinois Power Agency
Attn: 2026 Long-Term Plan Stakeholder Feedback
105 W. Madison St., Suite 1401
Chicago, IL 60602

Re: Topic #2 – Developer Cap for Community-Driven Community Solar (CDCS)

Rockford Area Habitat for Humanity builds affordable homes for families in Winnebago County. Over the past few years we have seen firsthand why the Community-Driven Community Solar program is the best approach for turning clean-energy policy into real-world progress for Illinois families and community organizations. Our team was part of the partnership for 4MW Rock Cut Solar community solar project that was selected in the 2022 program year, and is nearly completed with construction. This project has resulting in over \$135,000 in donations to local organizations like ours, has employed dozens of local union workers, and will be bringing thousands of dollars in utility bill savings to local residents like the families we serve.

The impact from the CDCS program comes from the emphasis on local community benefits. Projects are scored and selected because they knit together local nonprofits, municipal leaders, and experienced developers to deliver measurable community benefit. The application process already tracks how these projects will help residents save on utility bills, gain workforce experience, and how projects will benefit local organizations. Those questions—and the scoring behind them—ensure that only projects with strong, authentic local partnerships rise to the top.

Placing a cap on how many megawatts any one developer can bring to that table would upend a system that is working. Habitat's families care far less about *who* develops the community solar project than *what* the array does for their community and their monthly budget. Experienced developers know how to guide a project from idea to reality, and after one successful collaboration we want them back for the next neighborhood, the next school district, the next nonprofit. A hard cap would force communities like ours to turn away a trusted partner just when momentum is building and the learning curve has been climbed.

Instead of limiting participation, we urge the Agency to keep CDCS open to every project that can prove deep, local impact. Growing the program, sharing best-practice examples, and offering technical help to new market entrants will broaden the field without slowing down shovel-ready ideas. Families moving into Habitat homes cannot wait for the "perfect" mix of developers—they need energy savings today, and CDCS is delivering.

Thank you for protecting a program that turns clean-energy ambition into lower utility bills, stronger nonprofits, and healthier neighborhoods. We respectfully ask that the Illinois Power Agency preserve the current, merit-based approach to CDCS and decline to impose a developer cap.

Sincerely,

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