

Thank you for the opportunity to add our thoughts and comments on the 2026 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan (LTRRPP).

The Illinois Shines program brought hope to non-profit organizations because of the Community-Driven Community Solar (CDCS) program. The CDCS category serves key tenets of CEJA and FEJA, which is to prioritize community empowerment and access to clean energy. CDCS is the most community-focused category, yet it continues to receive the smallest MW allocation.

CDCS speaks to the original promise of Illinois community solar because it requires developers to serve entire communities, both with the discounts they offer and programs that serve the residents. Developers engage directly with schools, nonprofits, and local stakeholders to tailor benefits for the neighborhoods their projects serve

CDCS projects also do not serve single off-takers like other programs do. Additionally, many developers commit to subscriptions at the local level (county-wide). This further differentiates the program as community focused and beneficial, especially because traditional community solar has longer waitlists. CDCS projects offer equal access to solar energy's benefits and meaningfully contribute to workforce development, educational programming, and long-term economic opportunity. Moreover, residents are benefiting from *local projects* built in and around their community.

We understand that some procurements in other Illinois Shines categories have gone underfilled, while CDCS projects are placed on wait lists despite offering greater capacity and more substantial alignment with CEJA objectives. Prioritizing CDCS would accelerate these high-impact projects and ensure that historically underserved communities benefit quickly from Illinois' transition to clean energy.

We are engaged with solar developers through CDCS and are beginning to see its benefits. We respectfully request that when considering the LTRRPP, the IPA prioritize CDCS projects to ensure these benefits and the promise of CEJA and FEJA are fulfilled. We believe the IPA should work to ensure developers with waitlisted projects continue their commitment to Illinois rather than move to other states that do not have the barriers to entry. Moreover, the IPA should consider streamlining the process to approve and construct these projects whenever possible.

We thank you for all your work and for giving us the opportunity to offer our thoughts about a program that we believe deserves to be prioritized in the IPA's future planning.

Richard Alton

Net Zero/Creation Care Committee

Northern Illinois Conference

United Methodist Church