

ILLINOIS
ENVIRONMENTAL
COUNCIL

20
19

LEGISLATIVE
REPORT



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ABOUT IEC

WHO WE ARE

The Illinois Environmental Council serves as the environmental community's eyes, ears and voice in Springfield.

Since our founding in 1975 by a group of dedicated grassroots environmentalists, IEC has sponsored issue advocacy campaigns and projects by allowing environmental organizations to pool their resources and create a higher profile for environmental issues. Today, IEC represents 80 environmental and community organizations and nearly 300 individuals from throughout Illinois.

WHAT WE DO

IEC promotes sound environmental laws and policies. We encourage decision makers in the private sector to go beyond minimum standards to establish new environmental best practices.

IEC supports environmental activists across the state and is building programs to cultivate the next generation of environmental leadership. IEC is working to establish stronger relationships among leaders in communities of color who are committed to environmental stewardship and sustainability. This approach reflects our values and will help the environmental community realize its goals.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S LETTER

Dear IEC Supporter,

In a demonstration of the growing strength of our community and that the General Assembly increasingly prioritizes environmental issues, IEC is proud to say that we had our most successful legislative sessions in decades.

We passed a broad and ambitious agenda, defeated potentially damaging legislation and secured important appropriations in the state budget.

This session proved that elections matter. Our new governor, Gov. Pritzker, committed to achieving 100% renewable energy by 2050 in Illinois, and the legislature seems to share this ambition to tackle our biggest environmental challenges.

A clear majority in both chambers voted to repeal the antiquated Kyoto Protocol Act, positioning Illinois to begin regulating our carbon emissions and **marking the first time we have a proven legislative majority ready to act on climate change!**

These successes were only possible because of advocates like you. Because you took action on critical issues when we needed your help, lawmakers understood what was at stake and that their constituents would hold them accountable.

But our work is not done. In fact, it's more important than ever that you stay engaged because that is the only way we'll continue to build our movement's momentum and get some of our most important priorities across the finish line.

In this report, we review our successes and highlight our highest legislative priorities that still require action.

Thank you for your support,

Jennifer Walling

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



2019 Lobby Day



IEC Lobby Team & Partners,
2019 Session

CLEAN ENERGY

Illinois' energy future will be shaped by the decisions we make today in regards to energy efficiency, renewable energy, fossil fuels and transportation. IEC believes that clean energy policies in Illinois should provide an energy system that is just, democratic, equitable and composed of genuinely clean energy, based on conservation and not endless consumption.

THE CLEAN ENERGY JOBS ACT (CEJA)(CASTRO/WILLIAMS)

CEJA is the most equity-centered 100% clean energy legislation in the country, and it gained strong momentum this spring. CEJA has more cosponsor support than any other energy proposal and the broadest coalition backing.

The legislature had many big ticket items on the agenda during the regular session and, thus, discussions about energy were pushed to the summer. We successfully defeated all bad energy bills, and now we will get CEJA done in the fall veto session.

COAL ASH POLLUTION PREVENTION ACT SB9 (BENNETT/AMMONS)

IEC, along with many of our partners, heavily negotiated this major legislation to protect clean water and public health. This bill creates a regulatory framework to ensure polluters, not taxpayers, pay for needed closure and cleanup, guarantees public participation and transparency, and provides Illinois EPA the funds it needs to properly oversee closure and cleanup. SB 9 pass 77-35-1 in the House and 39-9-7 in the Senate.

DIRTY INDUSTRY BILL HB1633 (HOFFMAN/HASTINGS)

This was an ALEC bill that protected new pollution projects from criticism and enhanced penalties on criminal actions already illegal in Illinois. Sen. Hastings heard the concerns and demonstrated the courage to stand up against the bill, stopping it from advancing. HB1633 passed 77-28-3 in the House but was tabled in the Senate.

CLEAN ENERGY

SOLAR AND EV READY CONSTRUCTION HB2652 (HALPIN/BELT)

This legislation will allow expansion of building codes to include solar, electric vehicle and other supplemental codes. HB2652 passed 112-1 in the House and 54-0 in the Senate.

SOLAR OPPORTUNITIES FOR UNIVERSITIES SB211 (BENNETT/STUART)

This legislation addresses regulatory barriers to university procurement of solar and wind power. An initiative of SIU, this will increase the length of time that a university can use to pay back wind and solar power purchases. SB211 passed 49-0 in the Senate and 108-8 in the House.

COUNTY WIND DEVELOPMENT HB2988 (WILLIAMS/CUNNINGHAM)

This bill clarifies current law by making it even more explicit that only counties and municipalities have zoning authority over wind farm development. This change will facilitate wind development to facilitate growth, as it has since 2007, under the regulatory oversight of the county and municipal governments in Illinois. HB2988 passed 43-7-1 in the Senate and 95-12-1 in the House.

GREENEST CANNABIS BILL IN THE NATION HB1438 (STEANS/CASSIDY)

IEC worked with legislators to add new Illinois specific, nation-leading standards and administrative framework to this bill that help mitigate some of the negative impacts that would otherwise result from expanding the cannabis industry in Illinois. The inclusion of our proposal makes this the “greenest” cannabis bill in the nation. This bill passed 38-17-2 in the Senate and 66-47-2 in the House.

TAKING ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE HB3481 (GABEL/ELLMAN)

By removing a provision in existing statute, this bill authorizes Illinois to take action on climate change by regulating greenhouse gases. This vote on this bill demonstrates a pro-climate action majority for the first time in both chambers. It is the first stand alone climate bill to receive a majority roll call and move to the governor. HB3481 passed 66-44-1 in the House and 36-17 in the Senate.



CONSERVATION

Illinois was once at the forefront of the state park movement, but has since fallen behind most of the nation with regards to both open space available to its citizens and conserved for future generations. IEC believes that Illinois should have a permanent, dedicated source of land protection and stewardship funds, the IDNR should be fully funded, local governments should be able to acquire and protect open spaces, indigenous species should be protected and that outdoor recreation should be better supported.

WRONGFUL TREE CUTTING HB3105 (EDLY-ALLEN/STADELMAN)

This legislation fairly compensates owners of protected lands who have suffered damages from illegal logging. HB3105 passed 113-0 in the House and 53-0 in the Senate.

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS HB2601 (MORGAN/BUSH)

Makes changes to the law on conservation easement to encourage greater flexibility in protecting open space and conservation areas. HB2601 passed 56-0-1 in the Senate and 97-0 in the House.

REMOVING ENDANGERED SPECIES PROTECTIONS - HB2425 (CHESNEY)

We were able to stop HB2425/SB1336, bill that jeopardize endangered species by eliminating certain requirements for permits, notice and public hearings. This bill would have left the protection of federal endangered species in the hands of the Trump administration, as they actively rolling back protection of endangered species. HB2425 was held with a vote of 60-47-3 in the House.





SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Agriculture accounts for a major part of Illinois' economy, totaling nearly \$19 billion annually through the sale of corn, soybeans and livestock, yet our state policy addressing agriculture's impact on our environment and public health remains limited. In the last decade, we have seen underfunded budgets at IDNR and IDOA, leading to the shutdown of programs that are vital in protecting our waters from nutrient pollution. IEC is committed to educating lawmakers about the impacts of the agricultural industry and advocating for full funding at IDNR, IDOA and Illinois' Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

SUPPORTING NUTRIENT LOSS REDUCTION GOALS SR52 (BENNETT)

This resolution calls for the state to support the Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy.

PROMOTING SOIL HEALTH HB2737 (HALPIN/BENNETT)

The Soil Water and Conservation Districts (SWCDs) are an important resource for farmers in Illinois. This legislation adds soil health practices to the list of resources that SWCDs can provide for farmers. The bill passed the House 112-0 and 59-0 in the Senate.

ENHANCING LOCAL FOOD OPPORTUNITIES HB2505 (WEST/FOWLER)

In redefining the definition of "local", this bill will improve opportunities for the state to purchase local food. This bill passed unanimously out of both chambers. 112-0 in the House and 56-0 in the Senate.



CLEAN WATER

Our existing clean water laws should be fully implemented and enforced, providing adequate public access to decision-making processes. Changes to Illinois laws, policy and regulations regarding water resources are required to increase the ability of affected citizens to enforce the law, to ensure that regulatory agencies have robust and aggressive inspection and enforcement programs and policies with meaningful consequences for illegal polluters, and to increase public access and availability of pollution and permitting data.

MICROPLASTICS SB1392 (MORRISON/BATINICK)

With the growing threat of plastics in our water and our food sources, IEC introduced legislation that requires a study of the threat of microplastics and opportunities for regulatory and legislative protections. The bill passed 118-0 in the House and 57-0 in the Senate.

EQUITABLE WATER RATES SB1724 (HARRIS/FORD)

This legislation requires that the University of Illinois-Chicago study the setting of water rates in northeastern Illinois. Subject to appropriation, the study will take into consideration factors when setting rates, challenges for low-income communities and opportunities for greater collaboration and equity. This bill passed the House 108-8 and 49-0 in the Senate.

WATER JOBS FOR ALL SB2146 (VILLIVALAM/SLAUGHTER)

This bill will create funding and resources for water jobs training programs and those from disadvantaged communities that are placed in them. The bill passed the House 103-11 and passed the Senate 58-0.

USE OF STATE REVOLVING FUNDS HB2650 (RITA/SIMS)

To ensure that state revolving funds for water infrastructure can be used broadly by communities, this bill will set forth a rulemaking by IEPA to clarify the use of SRF for 'set-aside' programs, such as consolidation. Passed the House 108-0 and the Senate 56-0.

FUNDING FOR LEAD SERVICE LINE REPLACEMENT HB3501 (BUSH/ MANLEY)

An expansion to the Property Assessed Clean Energy program (PACE) was passed that provides property tax mechanisms to fund replacement of lead service lines. The bill passed the House 109-1 and the Senate 55-0.

WASTE

IEC envisions an Illinois with zero waste, where reduction and reuse are the state's disposal goals, where curbside and commercial recycling are ubiquitous, where composting is accessible to the public, where producers have the responsibility for the entire life cycle of their products, and where disposal infrastructure is improved.

STATE ACTION ON WASTE HB3068 (COSTA-HOWARD/ELLMAN)

This bill will require the state to develop a comprehensive plan to address solid waste. This legislation also provides for the establishment of recycling programs at state agencies with specific goals around waste reduction. 104-6 in the House and 54-0 in the Senate.

BULK CONTAINERS HB3440 (GUZZARDI/STEANS)

This legislation will cut down waste by ensuring that retailers may offer the use of personal containers for bulk foods. This clarifies uncertainties surrounding this issue and prevent municipalities from unnecessarily banning the use of personal containers in the future. 91-6 in the House and 54-0 in the Senate.



TOXICS

Exposure to chemicals that are persistent, bio-accumulative and toxic can occur over extended time periods, affecting generations of humans and wildlife. Virtually every man-made product involves the use of chemicals in some manner and new chemicals are being developed every year. IEC is fighting for increased transparency and protections from toxics for both public health and wildlife in the state of Illinois.

BPA RECEIPTS HB2076 (VILLA/GILLESPIE)

BPA (bisphenol A) is an industrial chemical that has been used to make certain plastics and has been found to be a threat to human health. Some retail establishments still use receipt paper that is made with BPA, presenting a risk to both the workers and customers. This bill prohibits the manufacture and distribution of paper with BPA for the purpose of banking and business records. Passed the Senate 51-0 and the House 114-0.

ETHYLENE OXIDE SB1852/SB1854 (DURKIN/CURRAN, MASON/BUSH)

IEC worked with Senators Curran and Bush, and Representatives Durkin, Mason, and Yingling to craft legislation that strengthens protections against ethylene oxide. SB1852 regulates sterilization facilities such as Sterigenics and Medline, the two biggest emitters in the state. It provides a pathway to keep bad actors such as Sterigenics closed and lowers the emissions level of Medline to the lowest permitted emissions in the country. SB1854 is a step towards regulating Vantage, a manufacturing company that emits a large level of ethylene oxide, by requiring emissions monitoring, dispersion modeling, and giving the IEPA the ability to reopen and cap their emissions permit. SB1852 passed the House 108-0-1 and the Senate 53-0. SB1854 passed the House 90-17 and the Senate 55-1.

EJ PERMIT NOTICE SB1847 (MUNOZ/MAH)

IEC supported legislation this session that requires enhanced notice and opportunities for public participation for air permits within environmental justice communities. SB1847 passed the Senate 47-0 and the House 101-11.



Coal Ash Press Conference

2020 ILLINOIS STATE BUDGET

The General Assembly passed both a FY20 budget for our state and a 10-year capital infrastructure budget, as well as their accompanying revenue bills.

Highlights of the budget and capital plan include:

- New capital funding for solar and wind energy and energy efficiency as well as low income electric vehicle infrastructure.
- Full appropriation for the Illinois Solar for All program in 2019 and 2020.
- New funding for land acquisition and stewardship.
- A new program to incentivize cover crops, funding for soil and water conservation districts, and funding for the conservation reserve enhancement program.
- Funding for Brandon Road and nearly a third of a billion dollars in loans and grants for various water infrastructure loan projects.

Unfortunately, fees were increased for electric vehicles starting January 1, 2020. While we were able to defeat a punitive \$1,000 fee with the help of our supporters contacting their legislators, the fees imposed will include the removal of the discount for electric vehicle license plates, meaning registration will go from \$17.50 a year to \$148, the normal vehicle price. On top of that, electric vehicles will also pay a \$100 annual fee. This fee is about the average electric vehicle fee in the country. While it isn't the highest fee in the country, Illinois also does not supplement electric vehicle ownership with any rebates like many states do. Note that this only applies to electric vehicles and not hybrid electric vehicles.

In addition, we are disappointed by the lack of grant programs to address drinking water infrastructure issues, including nutrient pollution and lead service line removal. These serious water issues should be addressed by more than just loan funding. We are also disappointed to see the level of open space land acquisition much lower than historical funding.





ENVIRO PRIORITIES BUDGETED

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

- \$300,000 for crop insurance discount for cover crops is included in the budget. This is an incredibly exciting win for our partners in conservation.
- \$7.5 million for soil and water conservation districts is included in the budget, including \$3 million for cost share projects to support on the ground nutrient reduction and soil erosion prevention work. Unfortunately, health insurance benefits were not returned to SWCDs at a cost of \$1.4 million.
- There is a \$37 million reappropriation for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program and \$20 million of new funding in the capital plan.

CLEAN WATER

- Overall level funding for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.
- The budget includes full spending for operation of the Natural Areas Acquisition Fund, including possible funding for stewardship by land trusts. The capital plan included \$10 million for the Natural Areas Acquisition Fund.
- The budget includes a \$20 million reappropriation of Open Lands Trust and the capital budget includes \$25 million of new appropriation for land acquisition.
- Funding for parks through Open Space Land Acquisition Development includes operations funding as well as \$29 million new and \$17 million reappropriation for OSLAD. The capital plan includes \$23 million for OSLAD. There is an additional \$50 million for parks in the capital plan.
- Partners for Conservation is funded at \$1,971,900, which supports staff involved in natural land and conservation cropping programs through IDNR.
- Wildlife Preservation Fund is in the budget at \$500,000 for consultation. This program is funded by both federal sources and the tax checkoff box. We hope for previous habitat grants from this program to return.



CLEAN ENERGY

- \$50 million for the Renewable Energy Resources Fund for the Illinois Solar for All program, which prioritizes new solar development and job training in low-income communities.
- Sufficient appropriation to Illinois Power Agency, which helps implement FEJA.
- \$2 million to Illinois Green Economy Network training programs.
- \$2 million in the energy efficiency trust fund to environmental justice programs at the IEPA Department of Energy.
- \$70 million in the capital plan for renewable energy and energy efficiency programs. This is sufficient funding for 5% of state building energy usage.
- \$70 million is in the capital plan for electric vehicle infrastructure in low income communities.
- \$20 million is reappropriated and \$60 million is appropriated from the Volkswagen settlement fund in the budget.

LEAD

- \$15 million reappropriation to CLEAR-WIN, the Comprehensive Lead Reduction and Window Replacement Program.
- \$50 million reappropriation for lead service line replacement at schools.
- The budget and capital plan do not include any new funding to address lead removal, including lead service lines.

CLEAN WATER

- \$10 million for Water Revolving Fund in the budget and \$200 million for the Water Revolving Fund in the capital plan.
- \$2 million for the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center.
- \$22 million for flood mitigation and buy-outs in the budget, and \$10 million for flood mitigation in the capital plan.
- \$2.5 million for Brandon Road planning is in the capital plan.
- \$20 million for dam removal in the capital plan.
- \$25 million for green infrastructure grants is in the capital plan.
- \$23 million for U.S. Army Corp of Engineers on ecosystem restoration projects in the capital plan.

TRANSPORTATION

- Approximately 22.5% share for mass transit.
- 20% of the revenue from the gas tax increase will go to transit annually.
- \$50 million annually for bike and pedestrian infrastructure.



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