



2023 CHICAGO CITY COUNCIL ENVIRONMENTAL SCORECARD



Dear supporter,



This year, IEC is releasing its second-ever scorecard evaluating the environmental performance of the Chicago City Council. Since our last scorecard was released in June of 2021, IEC and our partners have continued to build environmental power among City Council members and the Chicago Mayor's office.

We felt it was timely to release this year's scorecard ahead of the 2023 aldermanic and mayoral elections. In addition to this scorecard, IEC conducted briefings with several mayoral candidates to get them up to speed on environmental issues in Chicago and set the tone for what we need in the next environment-focused mayor.

With this resource, we are now able to provide our members and Chicago voters with information about the environmental voting history of your alderperson as you head to the polls.

Moreover, we hope this will be a useful resource and allow you to see whether your alderperson has used their power in the City Council to protect you and our environment or whether they used their power to aid big polluters and dirty fossil fuel special interests instead.

Within this report, you will find a nearly full-term scorecard encompassing votes from 2019 through 2022. It includes a wide range of priorities, from clean energy to wildlife conservation to environmental justice.

Despite the significant impact of COVID-19 and several alderpersons resigning during the term, we've seen significant investment in environmental protection. Under Mayor Lori Lightfoot's administration, there's been several environmental victories – the release of the 2022 Climate Action Plan, the 3-year We Will planning initiative, greening of the city's building standards, establishment of Chicago's first Urban Forestry Advisory Board, denial of the General Iron permit, and nearly \$200 million for climate-related infrastructure included in the FY2022 budget.

However, despite these efforts, Chicago remains without a Department of Environment. In 2022, we led a campaign to re-establish the Department that was dismantled over a decade ago. In the absence of a dedicated department, we've seen a significant fall in environmental enforcement and inspections, evidenced by accidents like the botched, city-approved Hilco smokestack implosion which spewed a large plume of toxic dust into Little Village, an environmental justice community, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

While the city's FY2023 budget ultimately did not include a Department, because of our advocacy efforts, we saw an increase in the staffing, funding, and power of the newly created standalone Office of Climate and Environmental Equity, which will nevertheless be critical to advance the City's sustainability goals. Additionally, the budget codifies the City's commitment to a study on re-establishing the Department of Environment, which will allow IEC and our members to influence the scope and mission of the new department.

IEC would like to extend a special thank you to Alderpersons **Matt Martin, Maria Hadden, Michael Rodriguez, Byron Sigcho-Lopez, Daniel La Spata, Andre Vasquez, Scott Waguespack, Sophia King, George Cardenas, Rossanna Rodriguez-Sanchez, Harry Osterman and Carlos Ramirez-Rosa** for their support to establish a new Department of Environment.

While this scorecard cannot capture the entire picture of the business conducted by the Chicago City Council or its alderpersons, it'll be a great supplement to better understand the progress they did and did not make over the course of their term. Each of these votes is critical to protecting Chicagoans' health and the environment.

We would be remiss not to express how grateful we are to the city council alderpersons who have introduced ordinances at the request of IEC or our members and to those who have pushed for environmental protection at the request of their community members.

Thank you for learning more about your elected officials with us! We encourage you to dive into this tool and keep it at hand as you head to the polls, read the news, engage with our updates, or reach out to your alderperson's office.



Iyana Simba, City Programs Director

100% RATING ENVIRONMENTAL SCORECARD

Alderspersons receiving 100% Environmental Scores between 2021-2022

1st Ward Ald. **Daniel La Spata**
 4th Ward Ald. **Sophia King**
 20th Ward Ald. **Jeanette Taylor**
 22nd Ward Ald. **Michael Rodriguez**
 25th Ward Ald. **Byron Sigcho-Lopez**
 32nd Ward Ald. **Scott Waguespack**
 33rd Ward Ald. **Rossana Rodriguez-Sanchez**
 35th Ward Ald. **Carlos Ramirez-Rosa**
 40th Ward Ald. **Andre Vasquez Jr.**
 47th Ward Ald. **Matt Martin**
 49th Ward Ald. **Maria Hadden**

Green Champions (Alderspersons Receiving 100% Environmental Scores over their full term)

1st Ward Ald. **Daniel La Spata**
 20th Ward Ald. **Jeanette Taylor**
 25th Ward Ald. **Byron Sigcho-Lopez**
 33rd Ward Ald. **Rossana Rodriguez-Sanchez**
 35th Ward Ald. **Carlos Ramirez-Rosa**
 40th Ward Ald. **Andre Vasquez**
 47th Ward Ald. **Matt Martin**
 49th Ward Ald. **Maria Hadden**

POWER AND DUTIES OF CHICAGO CITY COUNCIL ALDERPERSONS: A QUICK OVERVIEW

The Chicago City Council is presided over by the mayor of Chicago and comprises 50 elected alderpersons who represent communities in Chicago's 50 different political wards.

The council proposes, debates, and passes ordinances to regulate city affairs. Any alderperson or citizen can submit an ordinance to the City Clerk's Office. Ordinances are introduced at the monthly full City Council hearing, after which they are assigned to a committee. Once assigned to a committee, alderpersons serving on that committee can hold a hearing where they consider public testimony in support or opposition. If an ordinance passes out of the committee, it continues to the full city council for a vote. An ordinance becomes law if a majority of the city council votes in support.

Alderspersons have a strong influence within their wards. For example, they can influence the City's Department of Planning decisions, which can mean the difference between their community getting a new park or a new industrial polluter.

Alderspersons also control the budget for their ward, meaning they can allocate funds to bike lanes, park infrastructure and updates, rain gardens, and other green projects or constituent services that improve the health and well-being of the community and environment. These budgets are often a good window into the values and priorities of each alderperson.

Similarly, the City's overall budget can be a critical tool to support the environment. The budget reflects the City's priorities, and too often, environmental initiatives are last to be included and first on the chopping block. Funding environmental oversight—polluter inspections, tree canopy protection, park maintenance, public transit, electric vehicle charging, water infrastructure upgrades, and other programs are needed for Chicago to accomplish its environmental priorities.

When determining if your alderperson is doing enough to protect our environment, consider how they voted when it mattered and how they prioritize the environment within their ward and decision-making.



EXPLANATION OF SCORING

For each bill, alderpersons are evaluated on whether they voted with the pro-environment position ("+") or against it ("-"). For bills that the environmental community supported, a YES vote is a + and a NO vote is a -. For bills that were opposed, a NO vote is a + and a YES vote is a -. The votes are then tallied, and an overall score is calculated. For instance, someone who voted pro-environment on six bills and against four bills is given a 60% score.

The only votes not counted were those when an alderperson had an excused absence (noted in the chart as "A"), which generally meant that they were not present in the city council on that day due to an illness or other unexpected circumstances. Alderpersons who had absences were scored according to the other votes they cast.

When an alderperson is present in the city council on the day of a vote but fails to cast their vote, we have counted it the same as a "no" vote on the ordinance. This circumstance is noted in the voting chart as "NV" and counted the same as a "+" when this action supports the pro-environment position. It is indicated as "nv" and counted as "-" when it does not help the pro-environment position.



ORDINANCE VOTES SCORED

O2021-2869: SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BY REQUEST ONLY ORDINANCE - OPPOSE

- Requires restaurants to provide single-use foodware by request only with exemptions for drive through facilities, charities, and airports. This ordinance lacks any enforcement measures.

SO2021-362: NATIVE GARDENS REGISTRY ORDINANCE - SUPPORT

Sponsor: Alderperson Brian Hopkins (2nd ward)

- Protects Chicagoans who follow sustainable landscaping practices from citations under the current Weeds ordinance by allowing them to register their native plant gardens on their property at no cost.

O2022-672: FOSSIL FUEL DIVESTMENT ORDINANCE - SUPPORT

Sponsor: City of Chicago Treasurer Melissa Conyears-Ervin

- Codifies the city's divestment strategy, prohibiting the city from investing nearly \$6.7 billion in assets associated with major fossil fuel companies.

SO2022-2000: CONNECTED COMMUNITIES ORDINANCE - SUPPORT

Sponsor: Mayor Lightfoot

- Makes important changes to the city's existing Transit-Oriented Development policy. Promotes more housing choices and affordability in transit-rich areas, provides more incentives for development near transit in disinvested communities and protects transit hubs from traffic violence.

O2022-2050: WATER AFFORDABILITY ORDINANCE - SUPPORT

Sponsor: Mayor Lightfoot

- Bans privatization of the City's water system and bans water shut off in most cases. Also adds annual water reporting requirements, including the number of water meters installed, the number of water accounts overdue, and an annual evaluation of the Utility Billing Relief Program, which provides water bill assistance to low-income Chicagoans.

SO2022-2008: 2022 CHICAGO ENERGY TRANSFORMATION CODE - SUPPORT

Sponsor: Mayor Lightfoot

- A significant update from the previously adopted 2019 Chicago Energy Conservation Code. Provides key advancements toward electrification, requires new buildings with gas appliances to be built with electrical capacity, new low-rise buildings designed to support solar panel installations, and incentivizes the use of smart heating and cooling to reduce energy demand during peak times.



CITY VOTING RECORD

WARD	NAME	02021-2869: ☒ Single Use Plastic Ordinance	S02021-362: ☑ Native Gardens Registry	02022-672: ☑ Divestment Ordinance	S02022-2000: ☑ Connected Communities Ordinance	02022-2050: ☑ Water Affordability Ordinance	S02022-2008: ☑ 2022 Chicago Energy Transformation Code	2023 SCORE	Midterm 2021 Score*
1	Daniel La Spata	+	+	+	+	+	+	100	100
2	Brian Hopkins	A	A	+	-	+	+	75	75
3	Pat Dowell	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75
4	Sophia King	+	+	+	+	+	+	100	87.5
5	Leslie Hairston	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	87.5
6	Roderick Sawyer	-	+	+	+	+	A	80	87.5
7	Gregory Mitchell	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75
8	Michelle Harris	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75
9	Anthony Beale	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	100
10	Susan Sadlowski Garza	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75
11	Patrick Thompson**	-	+	A (vacancy)	+	+	+	80	75
12	George Cardenas	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75
13	Marty Quinn	-	+	+	-	+	+	67	75
14	Ed Burke	NV	+	+	-	+	+	83	87.5
15	Raymond Lopez	-	+	+	-	+	+	67	87.5
16	Stephanie Coleman	-	+	+	+	+	nv	67	75
17	David Moore	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75
18	Derrick Curtis	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75
19	Matthew O'Shea	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75
20	Jeanette Taylor	A	A	+	A	A	+	100	100
21	Howard Brookins	-	+	+	nv	+	+	67	75
22	Michael Rodriguez	+	+	+	+	+	+	100	87.5
23	Silvana Tabares	-	+	+	-	+	+	67	75
24	Michael Scott***	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75
25	Byron Sigcho-Lopez	+	+	+	+	+	+	100	100
26	Roberto Maldonado	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75
27	Walter Burnett	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75
28	Jason Ervin	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75
29	Chris Taliaferro	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75
30	Ariel Reboyas	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75
31	Felix Cardona	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75
32	Scott Waguespack	+	+	+	+	+	+	100	75
33	Rossana Rodriguez Sanchez	+	+	+	+	+	+	100	100
34	Carrie Austin	-	+	+	A	A	+	75	75
35	Carlos Ramirez-Rosa	+	+	+	+	+	+	100	100
36	Gilbert Villegas	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75
37	Emma Mitts	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75
38	Nicholas Sposato	-	+	+	-	+	+	67	75
39	Samantha Nugent	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75
40	Andre Vasquez	+	+	+	+	+	+	100	100
41	Anthony Napolitano	-	+	+	-	+	+	67	75
42	Brendan Reilly	-	+	+	-	+	+	67	75
43	Michele Smith****	-	+	+	-	+	+	67	75
44	Tom Tunney	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75
45	Jim Gardiner	-	+	+	-	+	+	67	87.5
46	James Cappleman	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75
47	Matt Martin	+	+	+	+	+	+	100	100
48	Harry Osterman	-	+	A	+	+	+	80	75
49	Maria Hadden	+	+	+	A	+	A	100	100
50	Debra Silverstein	-	+	+	+	+	+	83	75

KEY

+ Pro-environment vote
- Anti-environment vote

nv Not voting, anti-environment vote
NV Not voting, pro-environment vote
E or A Excused or Absent

* These scores were published in IEC's 2021 Chicago City Council Scorecard, please visit ilenviro.org/iec-scorecard to read how we came to these scores in the previous scorecard.

** Resigned and replaced by appointed Alderperson Nicole Lee who took final 4 votes

*** Retired and replaced by appointed Alderperson Monique Scott who took final 2 votes

**** Retired and replaced by appointed Alderperson Timmy Knudsen who took final vote



CLOSING

The Chicago Environmental Scorecard is published by the Illinois Environmental Council (IEC) for purposes of public education. It provides a record and analysis of votes in the Chicago City Council on a wide range of environmental and conservation ordinances to create a better-informed citizenry.

No endorsement of any party, legislator, or political candidate is implied in this Scorecard or any other publications or activities of the Illinois Environmental Council. IEC does not make financial contributions to any candidate or political party.

Since 1975, the Illinois Environmental Council has worked to safeguard Illinois—its people, its plants and animals, and the natural systems on which all life depends by building power for people and the environment. Representing over 100 environmental organizations in the state, IEC carries out its mission to advance public policies that create healthy environments across Illinois through education, advocacy, and movement building.





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