

Illinois

Summary and Analysis

As a result of the basic demand policies, Illinois is positioned to be a leader in clean-energy industry development and green-job creation. However, many of the supply-side policies oriented toward green business development and innovation are missing. In our conversations with advocates in Illinois, explanations included the general paralysis of the state legislature, the influence of the state's coal industry, and the high levels of corruption involved in locating and building in the state, especially in the city of Chicago. As a result, Illinois generally lacks the integration of research, innovation, and new business development found in some of the other states. Likewise, although Chicago has a reputation as a sustainable city, its record is based primarily on urban greening policies and its climate action plan. The next-stage attempts to build a diverse range of green jobs from weatherization to manufacturing and technology innovation is much less developed. Nevertheless, there were some policies and programs worthy of additional study and potential emulation:

- The state has a strong suite of biofuels companies as well as research at Energy Biosciences Institute at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign underscores Illinois' leadership in biofuels research and processing.
- Chicago is a leader in low-end green jobs training, particularly weatherization and horticulture, but it also offers multiskill training in the Greencorps Program.

General Background Policy

Energy Goals. In 2006 an executive order from Governor Blagojevich (2006-09) announced a goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions from state government sources by 6 percent by 2010 (EPA 2008). In 2007 the state joined the Midwestern Greenhouse Gas Reduction Accord, which committed the state to 10 percent renewable energy by 2015. The state also announced a long-term plan of 25 percent renewable energy by 2025, and in 2007 the governor announced greenhouse gas emissions targets for the state of 1990 levels by 2020 and 60 percent below those levels by 2050 (State of Illinois 2007a). The Climate Action Plan developed in 2007 called for a range of vehicle efficiency standards in line with those of California, as well as renewable energy and energy-efficiency measures (State of Illinois 2007b). State agencies have a goal of purchasing about 5 percent of their power from renewable sources, and the state has steadily increased its percentage of flex-fuel vehicles (EPA 2008). The state has an energy-efficiency standard of 1 percent of sales in 2012 and 2 percent in 2015 (SB 1597 of 2007).

Public Benefits Fund. There is a public benefits charge that supports two funds, the Renewable Energy Resources Trust Fund, the Coal Technology Development Assistance Fund, and the Energy Efficiency Trust Fund. The first two receive about \$5 million per year, and the

third receives about \$3 million per year. The Renewable Energy Resources Trust Fund supports renewable energy projects, and the Energy Efficiency Trust Fund supports energy-efficiency projects, including for low-income homes. The latter is administered by the state's Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. A separate fund, the Illinois Clean Energy Trust, was developed after a settlement with ComEd and the state in 1999. The initial funding was \$250 million, which supports energy-efficiency and renewable-energy projects, as well as habitat restoration (DSIRE 2010).

Green-Buildings Policy. In 2001, Governor Ryan's Executive Order 11 encouraged energy-efficiency practices for the state's buildings (State of Illinois 2001). Legislation passed in 2005 (SB 0250) required that new construction of state government facilities use the "best available" energy conservation technologies. Legislation in 2007 required that all executive branch agencies reduce energy consumption by 10 percent within ten years. In 2009 Governor Quinn issued an executive order (No. 7) to establish an energy-efficiency committee to track changes and make recommendations. That year the state also approved the Green Buildings Act. Under the law, all new buildings and renovations over 10,000 square feet that receive state funding are required to have LEED silver or equivalent certification. (DSIRE 2010).

Green Jobs Training. The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity received \$6 million in ARRA funding in 2010 for green jobs training. In April of that same year, the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT), a private research university in Chicago, received a grant of \$5 million of ARRA funding from the Department of Energy to launch the Smart Grid Education and Workforce Training Center. An additional \$7.6 million will be supplied by the state and other partners within three years. The project anticipates training 49,000 people in a smart-grid curriculum over a three-year period. IIT will be partnering with Operation Green Jobs—a collaboration between the Chicago Staffing Alliance, the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs, and the Illinois Department of Employment Security—to conduct recruitment and placement of trainees (Illinois Institute of Technology 2010a).

In January of 2010, Governor Quinn announced a \$1.7 million grant to the Illinois Community College Sustainability Network, a consortium of forty-eight community colleges. The grant will be used to fund green job training centers at Southwestern Illinois College in Belleville, College of Lake County, and Wilbur Wright College in Chicago (Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity 2010).

Clean-Energy Industry Development

General Policy. The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity supports business development efforts, including some for green businesses. The department also administers various energy programs, and with funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) it made some grants for the Green Industry Business Development Program. For example, \$5 million was given to Ingersoll Machine Tools, a company in Rockford that manufactures wind-turbine components (State of Illinois 2010). However, other than for biofuels, Illinois lacks targeted programs to develop the state's clean-energy industries. The state has strong research universities, a relatively large population, ample resources for renewable

energy, and a large city with a manufacturing base, but the state government has not utilized the resources to develop its clean-energy industries.

Biofuels. Illinois is home to Archer Daniels Midland and has a large number of ethanol refineries due to an early commitment to biofuel production and commercialization. The state has also supported the industry through a series of demand policies. For example, in June, 2003, the Renewable Fuels Development Program was initiated (Public Act 93-51) through the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, offering up to \$5.5 million in construction grants per biofuel production facility with a capacity of at least thirty million gallons per year (Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity n.d.). The state government has supported the industry in other ways, including campaigns to increase the level of biofuels in the state's vehicle fleet (State of Illinois 2001). A statute (30 ILCS 500/45-60) also requires that state government contracts favor suppliers who use vehicles with biofuels powered by ethanol or biodiesel from in-state sources (EPA 2008).

In addition to policies that support biorefining facilities and general demand for biofuels, the state has also supported research. In 2004 the state government provided \$6 million to match \$15 million in federal funds to launch the National Corn-to-Ethanol Research Center at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (State of Illinois 2005). In November of 2007, the University of Illinois received a share in the Energy Biosciences Institute (EBI), which is supported by British Petroleum's \$500 million, ten-year commitment and involves a partnership with the University of California at Berkeley and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. The EBI consists of sixty-eight funded projects dedicated to the production and commercialization of cellulosic biofuels, including a 320-acre "energy farm" at the University of Illinois (Energy Biosciences Institute 2010). There is also biofuels research at the Wanger Institute for Sustainable Energy Research at the Illinois Institute of Technology and at other universities in the state.

As a result, the state has the research infrastructure to support a biofuels innovation cluster, and it has a biofuels industry. In addition to Archer-Daniels Midland, the state is also home to Coskata, DuPont Danisco, UOP Honewell, and IneosBio. Those companies enabled Illinois to be listed second, well behind California but tied with Colorado, in the number of companies listed as the fifty "hottest" biofuels companies for 2009-2010 for *Biofuels Digest*. As a result, the state has all of the elements in place for not only a biofuels production industry but a biofuels innovation industry: demand policies, research centers, and a critical mass of innovating companies. But the state government has not stepped in to target the industry and provide it with the support to move on to the next step.

Smart Grid. In February of 2010, the Illinois Institute of Technology announced the completion of the first high-reliability distribution system loop in its plan to develop a campus-wide system of smart microgrids. Referred to as the Perfect Power Project, partners include the Galvin Electricity Initiative, the local utility company, and private electricity distribution and delivery firms. The Perfect Power Project anticipates the whole campus to be online in four years. At a cost of \$12 million—\$7 million from a Department of Energy grant and \$5 million from IIT—the Institute anticipates a savings of \$10 million over a ten-year period (Illinois Institute of Technology 2010b). Although the state has received federal funding for a smart-grid

installation project in Naperville, it missed out on the \$620 million allotment from the Department of Energy in 2009.

Solar. In May of 2010, the Illinois General Assembly passed two bills related to solar energy that were part of a package called Rebuild Our Economy with New Energy Work (RENEW Illinois; Sierra Club, Illinois Chapter 2010). The Solar Ramp Up Bill (HB 6202) requires that 6 percent of the state's renewable energy comes from solar power by 2015. The other bill, the Homeowners' Solar Rights Act, clarifies the rights of homeowners and provides a process for homeowners in homeowner or condominium associations who want to erect solar panels. If the legislation is signed by Governor Quinn, it will result in the creation of as many as 5,000 new jobs and the generation of three million kilowatt-hours by 2015 (Environmental Law & Policy Center 2010).

Transportation and Energy Storage. Under President George W. Bush's hydrogen fuel initiative, Illinois was poised to be a leader in energy storage technology. The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity sponsored the Illinois 2H2 Partnership which connected Argonne National Laboratory's fuel-cell research facility with Illinois universities and the hydrogen industry. However, with practical applications twenty years away, the Obama administration moved away from funding research related to vehicular hydrogen fuel cells, opting instead to fund the development of technologies that promise a more immediate impact. Today, the Illinois 2H2 Initiative is defunct and that research infrastructure has not successfully transitioned to other energy storage technologies in order to maintain the cluster.

Wind. With the 2010 addition of Iberdrola Renewables' 300-megawatt Cayuga Ridge project, the state of Illinois has the sixth highest level of installed wind capacity in the nation, with 1,848 megawatts (American Wind Energy Association 2010). Despite the demand for wind energy and Illinois' utility-scale wind resources (U.S. Department of Energy 2009), the state government has not moved as aggressively as some neighboring states to develop Illinois' wind manufacturing industry.

In November of 2009, the Department of Energy awarded the Illinois Institute of Technology's Wagner Institute for Sustainable Energy Research \$8 million to spearhead a wind energy research consortium. The consortium, made up of state and local governments, private industry, and other universities, has been charged with addressing the challenges outlined in the Department of Energy's "20% Wind Energy by 2030" report. The consortium will focus on improving wind turbine performance and studying wind turbine and wind farm interaction (Illinois Institute of Technology 2009; SustainableBusiness.com 2009).

On the municipal level, the city of Evanston, which shares its southern border with Chicago, is exploring off-shore wind energy to power its 30,000 homes. The original proposal, put forth by Citizens for a Greener Evanston, sought to reduce the city's greenhouse gas emissions by 13 percent by 2012. The plan includes forty wind turbines to be located seven miles off the coast of Lake Michigan, where wind speeds average 19 to 20 mph (Citizens for a Greener Evanston 2009). In April, 2010, the Evanston city council voted unanimously to issue a Request for Information to wind farm developers (Long 2010). The RFI closes on June 30, 2010, and city officials anticipate proposals from ten developers (Barrosse 2010).

Chicago

Sustainability Plans. Chicago is regularly applauded for its efforts to green its infrastructure and businesses. The city launched the Department of the Environment in 1992, and it gradually added new environmental initiatives over the years. The early initiatives focused on tree planting and landscaping, and over time the city has developed a wider series of efforts that includes the use of recycled materials in roads, green roofs, transit-oriented development, and alternative fuel vehicles. In 2008, the city introduced the Chicago Climate Action Plan, calling for a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions to 25 percent below 1990 levels in ten years and an 80 percent reduction by 2050. Heating, cooling, and powering buildings, followed by transportation were determined to be the most significant contributors to the city's greenhouse gas emissions (Walljasper 2010). Therefore, most of the plan's steps focus on improvements in energy efficiency and transportation. The plan does not articulate any strategies for developing clean technology or green energy industries, but instead focuses on an increased demand for tradespersons to retro-fitted buildings and low-skill work related to landscaping and recycling (Schrock and Sundquist 2009).

Green-Building Initiatives. In 2004 the city adopted the Chicago Standard, a guide for green building construction for new buildings and building renovations for city-owned buildings. The Climate Action Plan has identified energy-efficient buildings as a central strategy (City of Chicago 2009, Johnston 2005) and includes a section that is dedicated to greening buildings. Since 2001 the city retrofitted fifteen million square feet of municipal buildings and helped to weatherize 1000 residences (City of Chicago 2009e). The city also supported the Energy Savers Program, a low-income weatherization program that is an initiative of the MacArthur Foundation and the Cook County Community and Economic Development Foundation. The city has added rooftop gardens and plants to over thirty municipal buildings and provided subsidies to enable over 400 buildings throughout the city to add green roofs. It has also worked with the local utility to develop a program to provide solar installations on the city's schools (Martin and O'Toole 2002), and it partnered with Excelon to build the country's largest urban solar power plant (City of Chicago 2009a). Under its Industrial Rebuild Program, the city provides free energy audits in one industry per year and offers zero percent financing for energy improvements based on the audits. The city's Green Permitting Program offers developers an expedited permitting process, shortening the processing time the more green building elements are included in the project (City of Chicago 2010b). Taken together, the many programs were a major contributing factor behind the high score that Chicago gained on many of the sustainable cities rankings. ShoreBank, a community bank dedicated to the development of low-income neighborhoods, has a variety of loan programs for building renovation, and it received \$35 million from the U.S. Treasury for work on green building projects (Chicago Sustainable Business Alliance 2009).

Green Jobs Training. Chicago is also known for its green jobs training programs, especially the Greencorps Program of Chicago. Launched in 1994 and managed by the city's Department of the Environment, the program provides community gardening assistance and green jobs training. It hires about fifty people each year for a nine-month training session for future jobs in landscaping and horticulture, electronics recycling, and weatherization (Chicago Jobs Council 2007, City of Chicago 2009d). During the period the trainees also assist the

community gardens program and work in a recycling center. Many of the members of the Greencorps training program are ex-offenders, and the program offers them an opportunity to live up to the promise of “jobs not jail.” The program is located in the Chicago Center for Green Technology, a LEED-certified building located on a seventeen acre site that was occupied by a company that violated permits and left significant solid waste. The city’s Department of Environment closed down the site and, after taking the company to court, became its owner in 1996 (City of Chicago 2009b). With ARRA funds, the city was able to increase the number of jobs for the Chicago Green Corps and develop another initiative, the Community Green Jobs initiative, which involves training in partnership with nonprofit organizations (Merritt 2009).

Another program of the city’s Department of Environment is the Chicago Conservation Corps. Founded in 2006, the program provides training sessions and some financial assistance to citizens who wish to undertake environmental service projects in their neighborhoods. Examples of projects include ride sharing programs, home energy audits, community garden development, and plastic bottle clean-ups (Phillip 2006).

Green Business Initiatives. Although the city’s Climate Action Plan does not include a strategy to develop clean-energy industries, the city is the headquarters of many green or clean-tech companies, including fourteen wind energy companies (City of Chicago 2010a). Mayor Daly also recruited two solar firms, Spire Solar and SolarGenix, to locate in the city by providing incentives and using the city’s procurement policy to spur demand. With loan guarantees from the federal government’s stimulus program, Excelon has partnered with the city of Chicago to build a solar farm on an unused industrial site on Chicago’s South Side. The project will generate 200 jobs during construction but only an estimated one job when it is up and running (Dumke 2009). Although the efforts to attract solar-energy companies and develop solar installation projects are laudable, there is no evidence of a comprehensive plan to develop the city’s solar industry.

There is a plan from the Department of Community Development to develop a part of the Addison Industrial Corridor for green tech and other high-technology businesses (City of Chicago 2009c). The corridor would build on the “Green Exchange,” a refurbished building in an adjacent neighborhood that plans to house up to 100 green businesses and will be financed from the tax-increment financing district. The building would have 275,000 square feet and would be the largest of its kind in the country (City of Chicago 2009f). However, the developers have struggled to find private financing for the project (Gallun 2009). The city also played a role in founding the Chicago Climate Exchange, a carbon emissions trading system, and the city formed the Greentown Enterprise Zone, which it used to attract clean tech businesses like SolarGenix, but the city does not have a focused economic development strategy that has assessed clean tech strengths and targeted industrial clusters for development.

Civil Society Organizations and Policy

Civil society organizations have increasingly rallied to the cause of green jobs. In 2002 Attorney Naomi Davis founded Daughter’s Trust/the Village Builders, and since then she has been trying to convert 1000 acres in Chicago’s South Side neighborhood of Riverdale into a mixed income, ecologically oriented village. Four years later she founded Blacks in Green,

which sponsors a weekly television show about African Americans and the environment and works to connect green jobs with the African American community (Olivesi 2009, Walker 2008). A broader coalition of organizations was formed in 2007 as the Chicagoland Green Jobs Initiative, which has hosted conferences of area organizations and developed research reports in support of green jobs (Green for All 2008). The Chicagoland Green Jobs Initiative has partnered with the city and the Partnership for Communities (a fund of The Chicago Community Trust) to obtain external foundation support for a program to train thirty to fifty public housing residents in weatherization (Partnership for Communities 2009).

The Local Economic and Employment Development Council (LEED Council) is a membership organization that includes over 100 businesses and institutions and promotes business and workforce development in the North River Industrial Corridor. Working with employers, LEED Council conducts customized recruitment, training, and job placement that seeks to increase access to jobs for low-income Chicago residents. Recently, LEED Council created training programs that develop weatherization, “green” maintenance, and solar panel installation skills.

The Chicago Sustainable Business Alliance (CSBA) connects sustainable businesses and eco-entrepreneurs throughout the city. In cooperation with the Illinois Institute for Technology’s Center for Sustainable Enterprise, CSBA regularly offers members nearly twenty workshops such as “Addressing Climate Change for Business” and “Anatomy of a Sustainable Enterprise Business Plan.”

The city is also home to the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT), a “think-and-do tank” that promotes urban sustainability with research and programs in transportation, community development, energy, and climate change. CNT Energy played a significant role in the development of the Chicago Climate Action Plan and is also the convener of the Illinois Smart Grid Initiative. CNT Energy has also been developing the Cook County Energy Savers program which provides proprietors of multi-family buildings with recommendations for becoming more energy efficient. CNT has been growing Energy Savers to serve the 7 county Chicago region and aims create a centralized way “to manage the financing, marketing, performance monitoring and certification, information provision, supply chain development, and customer assistance required to efficiently scale up the delivery of retrofit services for all types of buildings across the Chicago region” (Brookings Institute 2009). This project is 100 percent privately funded.

The Illinois chapter of the Sierra Club is a major player at the state level and was a significant force behind the recent RENEW Illinois legislation. The state chapter’s focus is on advocating for or against legislation proposed at the state level. The organization’s website explains their policy positions and members also maintain an active blog and YouTube channel documenting each legislative session.

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