



FILED
INDEX DEPARTMENT
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IN THE OFFICE OF
SECRETARY OF STATE

February 18, 2026

Executive Order 2026-01

**EXECUTIVE ORDER 2026-01
EXECUTIVE ORDER TO ACCELERATE NEW SAFE
NUCLEAR POWER GENERATION IN ILLINOIS**

WHEREAS, Public Act 102-0662, known as the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA), set forth the goal of the State of Illinois to have 100 percent clean energy economy-wide by 2050; and,

WHEREAS, in furtherance of this goal, the State has incentivized clean energy in myriad ways, through support of existing nuclear plants; development of strong energy efficiency programs; and establishment of a Renewable Portfolio Standard, which has resulted in the development of thousands of megawatts of new renewable energy projects; and through a variety of other measures; and,

WHEREAS, the Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability Act (CRGA), recently signed into law, set forth additional tools for State agencies to utilize to meet the challenges of responding to our clean energy, resource adequacy, and affordability goals; and,

WHEREAS, the tools set out in CRGA include lifting restrictions on the development of new nuclear plants, as well as establishing an Integrated Resource Planning (IRP) process that will allow State agencies to determine the quantity and type of resources to meet identified needs and the processes for procuring those resources; and,

WHEREAS, the joint agency Resource Adequacy Study (RA Study) directed by CEJA found that both PJM Interconnection (PJM) and the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO)—the regional transmission organizations (RTOs) in Illinois that design and administer capacity markets—are projected to face capacity shortfalls over the coming decade, driven by load growth projections at levels well above those observed in either PJM's or MISO's markets over the past twenty years, unless additional new capacity resources are developed; and,

WHEREAS, the RA Study cited RTO interconnection queues as one of the most significant barriers to bringing new generation online; and,

WHEREAS, the RA Study found the latest auctions in PJM and MISO each set record high capacity prices, signaling the need for additional resources and increasing costs to consumers; and,

WHEREAS, Illinois is the birthplace of the world's first controlled, self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction, orchestrated by Enrico Fermi and a team of scientists at the University of Chicago on December 2, 1942; and,

WHEREAS, Illinois generates more electricity from nuclear energy than any other state, accounting for one-eighth of the nation's total nuclear power generation and, in 2024, Illinois' six nuclear power plants, with eleven total reactors, produced 53% of the state's electricity net generation; and,

WHEREAS, nuclear power generation provides reliable, carbon-free electricity featuring resource adequacy attributes beneficial to the State of Illinois' effort to meet the growing electricity demand and foster economic development in a manner consistent with the State's environmental goals; and,

WHEREAS, to facilitate the development of the first new nuclear facilities in Illinois in 40 years, it is necessary to understand the potential for new nuclear power generation, the expansion of existing nuclear power generation, and uprates to existing nuclear power generation in the State; and,

WHEREAS, developing this understanding will also help ensure adequate, reliable, affordable, efficient, and environmentally sustainable electric service at the lowest total cost over time for Illinois' residents; and,

WHEREAS, a Notice of Inquiry (NOI) is a critical tool that not only allows for analytical information-gathering but also the examination and development of actionable market based solutions while facilitating the discovery of information from an unlimited number of parties, allowing for public use of the information in ongoing Integrated Resource Planning (IRP) processes, and allowing for continuous discussions with all interested stakeholders; and,

WHEREAS, the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) has an extensive history of employing Notices of Inquiry to critically examine information necessary to effectively shape and drive Illinois energy policy in important matters such as determining the cost and benefits of RTO membership, the preparedness of Illinois' utilities for extreme weather events, successful approaches for the beneficial electrification of Illinois' economy, ensuring energy affordability, and the advancement of strategies within Illinois energy markets designed to incent infrastructure investment and job growth for the working women and men of Illinois; and,

WHEREAS, the Illinois Commerce Commission and Illinois Power Agency (IPA) have substantial expertise in energy policy that makes them well positioned to utilize a Notice of Inquiry to evaluate and present their findings along with the policies necessary to influence current and future Illinois energy markets, including the role that new nuclear energy could play in order to ensure adequate, reliable, affordable, efficient, and environmentally sustainable electric service at the lowest total cost over time for Illinois' residents;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JB Pritzker, Governor of the State of Illinois, by virtue of the executive authority vested in me by the Illinois Constitution and the laws of the State of Illinois, do hereby request the following:

- I.** That the Illinois Power Agency and the Illinois Commerce Commission, within 60 days from the date of this Executive Order, and after consultation with other State agencies as appropriate, issue a NOI to potential developers of new nuclear power generation facilities that will benefit Illinois residential ratepayers, which information may include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Size in megawatts of nameplate capacity and technology type of proposed nuclear facilities, including any deployment of small modular reactor technology;
 - b. Financing options and frameworks for each proposed nuclear facility, including any requested clean energy credits or other supporting state policy, and whether the proposed nuclear facility is co-located with or otherwise selling directly to load;
 - c. Potential sites for each nuclear facility, including whether a facility would be in an Equity Investment Eligible Community;
 - d. Financial risk allocation framework;

- e. Grid interconnection availability;
 - f. Expected cost and timeline to bring the nuclear facility online;
 - g. Whether the project is designed to address specific Illinois resource adequacy needs;
 - h. Whether the project is designed to support economic development in Illinois;
 - i. Water needs for the proposed nuclear facility and available options for designated locations;
 - j. Workforce needs, including any workforce development training needs, programs to be provided by the developer, or partnerships with workforce or labor organizations;
 - k. Any outreach with potential nuclear facility location communities and any expected or proposed benefits to nuclear facility location communities;
 - l. Fueling lifecycle plans, including plans to meet fueling needs and safely handle waste disposal;
 - m. Whether any proposals included in a NOI response may require new legislation to implement; and
 - n. Other information deemed necessary by the IPA and the ICC to address specific Illinois resource adequacy needs;
- II.** That the IPA and the ICC also provide for the NOI to address potential expansion of or uprates to existing sites seeking similar information, as appropriate, in items a-n, above;
- III.** That the University of Illinois provide subject matter expertise from the Nuclear, Plasma, and Radiological Division within its Grainger College of Engineering to support the IPA and ICC;
- IV.** That the IPA consider the staffing and consultant needs and capacity the agency may experience over the coming 12 to 36 months to ensure that it has the scale and expertise necessary to facilitate new nuclear power generation development, the expansion of existing nuclear power plants, or uprates to existing nuclear power plants, including the potential establishment of new roles or the development of new core competencies;
- V.** That the ICC, after consultation with other State agencies as appropriate, issue a second NOI requesting information from communities interested in hosting a new nuclear facility in order to identify at least one site with strong potential to host such a facility; such NOI could request, but not be limited to, information concerning land availability, water costs and availability, any local economic development attributes, support from community members and key stakeholders, availability of interconnection infrastructure, including but not limited to from retired and retiring power plants, and such other information as the ICC deems necessary;
- VI.** That the information garnered from the NOIs described above shall be included in the deliberations for the IRP process required under CRGA; however, information developed through the NOIs shall not be presumed to dictate any particular IRP outcome;
- VII.** That the IPA, ICC, Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), Emergency Management Agency-Office of Homeland Security (IEMA-OHS), Department of Labor (IDOL), and other agencies as needed, along with the University of Illinois system, convene an inter-agency working group, to issue a report to the Governor's Office within 120 days from the posting of the NOI to potential developers, that addresses the following issues with respect to the development of new nuclear

generation or uprates totaling at least two Gigawatts in capacity, with construction to begin by 2033:

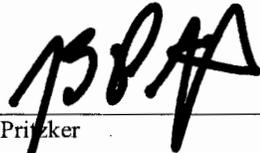
- a. A review of existing statutory and regulatory authority which impacts new nuclear plants;
- b. Any recommendations for safety, environmental, interconnection, or other regulations that would be needed to facilitate the development of a new nuclear generation facility;
- c. Any procurement procedures the State would need to adopt or modify to accommodate a new nuclear facility, aside from the provisions of CRGA; and
- d. Methods to evaluate proposals for new nuclear facilities, including consideration of customer affordability and protection; short and long-term risk to the State and utility customers; interconnection issues; and other issues deemed appropriate by the agencies.

In developing this information, the State agencies may consult with outside groups as needed, including the Illinois Economic Development Corporation, interested businesses and business organizations, labor representatives, and local officials;

- VIII.** That the interagency working group, within 120 days from the posting of the NOI, provide the Governor's Office with any draft legislative language as appropriate to allow for the implementation of the recommendations of the report;
- IX.** That the ICC, DCEO, and other State agencies as needed, convene a research and development-focused discussion on new and emerging nuclear energy generation topics with the national laboratories and research institutions in the State; such topics could include, but not be limited to: small modular reactors (SMR), uprates, spent fuel, water usage and technologies for nuclear plants, and others deemed necessary;
- X.** That the ICC work with both the impacted load-serving entities and Regional Transmission Organizations/Independent System Operators (RTO/ISO) to secure the ability of any potential new nuclear generation project to interconnect to the grid, and address any financial, technical or legal issues preventing timely and economically advantageous interconnection; such collaboration could include, but is not limited to, working with a RTO/ISO to improve interconnection study processes to facilitate rapid interconnection of new resources or to ensure eligibility of new nuclear generation in any expedited interconnection pathways offered by the RTOs;
- XI.** That DCEO assess likely workforce needs to support the construction and operation of new nuclear facilities and develop a plan to address any observed gaps in necessary training resources;
- XII.** That DCEO consider funding a nuclear energy and nuclear energy supply chain manufacturing training academy in the FY27 budget; and
- XIII.** That DCEO develop a nuclear energy supply chain report that identifies existing Illinois companies primed for expansion and growth by September 2026. In developing this report, DCEO shall engage with the University of Illinois system, Illinois Economic Development Corporation, Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center, the Illinois Manufacturers' Association, and any other business associations as appropriate.
- XIV. Savings Clause.** Nothing in this Executive Order shall be construed to contravene any federal or State law or regulation. Nothing in this Executive Order shall affect or alter the existing statutory powers of any State agency.

XV. Severability. If any provision of this Executive Order or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, this invalidity does not affect any other provision or application of this Executive Order which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application. To achieve this purpose, the provisions of this Executive Order are declared to be severable.

XVI. Effective Date. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately upon its filing with the Secretary of State.



JB Pritzker
Governor

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