



**IQ SOUTH FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS:
AMEREN ILLINOIS AND NICOR GAS**

OCTOBER 2020

AmerenIllinoisSavings.com

Select Participating CAAs/CBOs



CHAMPAIGN COUNTY
REGIONAL PLANNING
COMMISSION



**East Central Illinois
Community Action Agency**
"Helping People, Changing Lives"



Two Rivers
Regional Council of
Public Officials



Department of
Human Services



Rebuilding Together



Select Participating CAAs/CBOs



Wabash Area Development, Inc.

Western Egyptian E.O.C.



Illinois Valley

Economic Development Corporation



CEFS Economic Opportunity Corporation



BCMW Community Services, Inc.



Sangamon County Department of Community Resources



Process

- Outreach to CAA Executive Directors, Weatherization and LIHEAP leads and CBOs to invite them to small-group CAA-CBO-only small focus group meetings.
 - EDs participated in separate ED-only meetings.
 - Weatherization/LIHEAP leads in separate, longer focus group meetings.
 - Meetings also included participation from several utility representatives, whose role was to listen to and understand the feedback.
 - No “third rails” – topics that were untouchable. All feedback encouraged, positive and negative.
 - Key message was that utilities want to support increased engagement by CBOs/CAAs, not only in IQ-S Committee but importantly throughout the IQ portfolio/programs. CBOs/CAAs seen as in the best position to advise on IQ portfolio/program changes as they have direct engagement with residents of the struggling communities they serve.
- Active, enthusiastic participation. Small groups, limited to CBOs/CAAs and utility representatives, with topics and relatable language tailored for CBOs/CAAs, yielded robust participation and input.
- Facilitation by IQ-S Sr. Facilitator, Annette Beitel, with technical support from Tim Melloch, and note-taking support by FutEE supervisor Tomas Torres-Garcia.
- Received considerable leadership, guidance and support from **Dr. Dalitso Sulamoyo**, Chief Executive Officer of Champaign County Regional Planning Commission, and also member of IQ-S Leadership Team.

Substantive Areas Covered

- Participants asked to comment on goals for IQ portfolios/programs, in addition to FEJA statutory energy savings targets
 - CAAs/CBOs identified additional recommended IQ portfolio/program goals, including:
 - Increased funding for IQ programs, increased hiring from disadvantaged/rural communities, increased pool of diverse and rural vendors, and more recruiting/mentoring of diverse staff in all areas of portfolio.
 - In addition, health and safety (such as Porch Lights Program), more education on how to read and reduce bills beyond EE measures, for which funding is limited.
 - Provided input on possible trade-off between statutory savings goals and other IQ portfolio/program goals.

Substantive Areas Covered

- **SAG IQ Program Ideas:** Feedback and comments on all IQ program ideas proposed through SAG. Generally very favorable comments/interest, with one exception.
- **IQ Committee Ideas:** Feedback and comments on IQ program ideas that have emerged in the IQ committees which have been further refined.
- **Current Utility Programs:** Time permitting, feedback on current Ameren IL and Nicor programs, and suggestions on modifications, enhancements and/or challenges.
 - IQ-S committee will circle back and facilitate discussion on how utilities will incorporate CBO/CAA suggestions in the new IQ portfolio plans for 2022 - 2025

Next Steps

- Work with CAAs/CBOs to identify who would like to participate in November CBO/CAA feedback/utility response meeting geared towards incorporating CBO/CAA suggestions in new portfolio; work with interested individuals/organizations to help coordinate remarks to avoid duplication.
- Using structured and pre-determined metrics, evaluate additional CBOs to recruit for IQ-S committee in 2022 to fill in gaps (geographic gaps and to include additional diverse voices).
 - Outreach will be based on curated list of CBOs with dozens of potential candidates who provide direct EE or allied services that could leverage EE message.
- Per FEJA, Ameren IL and Nicor have demonstrated a high commitment to *ongoing* feedback throughout the portfolio cycle, not just tied to SAG portfolio planning timeline.
- Ameren IL and Nicor also very committed to identifying CBOs and CAAs who are interested and capable of greater involvement in program delivery; and providing necessary additional support to help them succeed.



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