

# Illinois EE Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) Large Group Meeting

**Tuesday, March 31**  
10:30 am – 12:00 pm  
Teleconference

## Attendees and Meeting Notes

Meeting Materials.....	1
Attendees.....	1
Meeting Notes.....	3
Introduction to Large Group SAG Meeting .....	3
ICC Staff and ICC Office of General Counsel Feedback to Nicor Gas (verbal presentation).....	4
Illinois Office of the Attorney General Feedback to Nicor Gas .....	4
National Consumer Law Center (NCLC) Feedback to Nicor Gas .....	5
Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) Feedback to Nicor Gas .....	5
Closing and Next Steps.....	6

### **Meeting Materials**

Meeting materials are posted on the [March 31 meeting page](#) of the SAG website:

- [March 31, 2026 Large Group SAG Agenda](#)
- [SAG Facilitator Introduction to March 31 Meeting](#)
- [ICC Staff and ICC Office of General Counsel Feedback to Nicor Gas \(no presentation\)](#)
- [Illinois Office of the Attorney General Feedback to Nicor Gas](#)
- [National Consumer Law Center \(NCLC\) Feedback to Nicor Gas](#)
- [Natural Resources Defense Council \(NRDC\) Feedback to Nicor Gas](#)

### **Attendees**

Name	Company or Organization
Celia Johnson	Facilitator (Celia Johnson Consulting)
Zoe Knaus	SAG Facilitation Support (Inova Energy Group)
Abigail Mine	Illinois Office of the Attorney General
Adam Roche	Cascade Energy
Andrey Gribovich	DNV
Anna Lydia Marrero	CEDA
Anthony Albano	Resource Innovations
Barb Ramos	Nicor Gas
Ben Campbell	Energy Resources Center, UIC
Brad Fortson	ICF
Brady Bedeker	Walker-Miller Energy Services
Carmine Tucci	Nicor Gas
Cassandra Anslow	Franklin Energy
Cassidy Kraimer	Community Investment Corp.
Chanda Rowan	Nicor Gas

<b>Name</b>	<b>Company or Organization</b>
Channel Turbides	ComEd
Charles Ampong	Guidehouse
Chris Neme	Energy Futures Group, representing NRDC
Chris Vaughn	Nicor Gas
Danish Murtaza	Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas
Darleen DeRosa	Bidgely
Denise Munoz	DMT Consulting
Elder Calderon	ComEd
Elizabet Kennedy	Nicor Gas
Elizabeth Horne	ICC Staff
Erika Dominick	Walker-Miller Energy Services
Erin Kempster	Power TakeOff
Ian VanArsdall	Nicor Gas
Ishita Kekare	Resource Innovations
Jaleesa Scott	ComEd
Jeffrey Carroll	DNV
Jenae Batt	Center for Energy & Environment
John Dakarian	Nicor Gas
John Lavallee	Leidos
Jonathan Skarzynski	Nicor Gas
Joshua Asiyambi	Nicor Gas
Joshua Ramos	Nicor Gas
Julie Hollensbe	Walker-Miller Energy Services
Kara Jonas	ComEd
Kari Ross	NRDC
Kate Agasie	Cook County DES
Keely Hughes	The JPI Group
Kegan Daugherty	Resource Innovations
Kelly Lena	Nicor Gas
Kit White	Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (MEEA)
Kristen Kalaman	Resource Innovations
LaJuana Garret	Nicor Gas
Laura Agapay-Read	Guidehouse
Lee Ringo	Energy Infrastructure Partners
Lilieric FlorezMonroy	Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas
Lisa Le Beau	BrightLine Group
Mark Milby	Elevate
Mark Szczygiel	Nicor Gas
Matt Armstrong	Ameren Illinois
Mia Berrios	People for Community Recovery
Michelle Norgard	CLEAResult
Mike King	Nicor Gas

<b>Name</b>	<b>Company or Organization</b>
Nick Burstein	CMC Energy Services
Nick Warnecke	Ameren Illinois
Nicole Popejoy	IL Association of Community Action Agencies
Nora Fitton	ICC Office of General Counsel (OGC)
Omayra Garcia	Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas
Pastor Vance	Elevate
Patrice McFarlin	Encolor Consulting
Rashaan Keeton	Center for Energy & Environment
Rose Williamson	Opinion Dynamics
Salina Colon	CEDA
Sarah Amspacher	Resource Innovations
Selena Worster Walde	ERTHE Energy Solutions
Shelby Smith	Illinois Office of the Attorney General
Stu Slote	Skytop Consulting
Ted Weaver	Dunsky Climate Advisors, representing Nicor Gas
Teri Lewand	ComEd
Thoams Stovall	Nicor Gas
Tina Grebner	Ameren Illinois
Wade Morehead	Morehead Energy, representing Ameren Illinois
Zach Ross	Opinion Dynamics

### **Meeting Notes**

See **red text** for follow-up items.

### **Introduction to Large Group SAG Meeting**

*Celia Johnson, SAG Facilitator*

Purpose of March 31 Meeting:

- For interested SAG participants to present feedback on the draft Nicor Gas 2027-2029 EE Plan presented to SAG on March 24
  - Nicor Gas presented an updated draft EE Plan due to the new Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability (CRGA) Act
  - All SAG participants had an opportunity to request time on the agenda to present feedback
  - The following SAG participants are presenting initial feedback:
    - ICC Staff and the ICC Office of General Counsel
    - Illinois Office of the Attorney General
    - National Consumer Law Center (NCLC)
    - Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)
- Next Steps: Confidential negotiations between non-financially interested stakeholders and Nicor Gas begin in April

Next Steps for SAG

- Due to the impacts of CRGA, the 2026 SAG Plan will not be developed until after the June 1, 2026 statutory filing deadline for utilities filing updated EE Plans with the ICC for approval

- The SAG Steering Committee will meet in June to discuss the draft SAG Plan for the second half of 2026
- The draft 2026 SAG Plan will be presented to the Large Group SAG on Wednesday, July 15, with an opportunity for feedback – a meeting invite is coming soon
- Regular SAG meetings will resume in September with the annual Net-to-Gross (NTG) update process
- Typically, the SAG does not meet during EE Plan negotiations or when EE Plan approval dockets are open at the ICC, unless there is a topic that requires discussion.
  - There are two topics that need discussion:
    1. ICC Staff requested a policy interpretation issue be discussed by SAG, regarding how utility evaluators are interpreting the NTG Ratio for Disadvantaged Areas policy (see Section 7.4 of [IL EE Policy Manual Version 3.1](#))
      - SAG meeting anticipated in May – date TBD
    1. The IL EE Policy Manual needs to be updated and re-filed with the Commission for approval, to make corrections due to CRGA Act changes
      - A SAG Policy Manual Subcommittee sign-up form will be circulated in early June
      - A redline Policy Manual will be circulated to the SAG Policy Manual Subcommittee by the end of June
      - If needed, a meeting will be held in July to discuss policy edits

*Abigail Miner: Can the NTG meeting wait until after June 1? The NTG process doesn't happen until September.*

- *Celia Johnson: Sure, I can wait until June to schedule if that is preferred. This is a policy issue and not related to the NTG process. I will follow-up with ICC Staff and the evaluators on options in June.*

### **ICC Staff and ICC Office of General Counsel Feedback to Nicor Gas (verbal presentation)**

*Elizabeth Horne, ICC Staff*

1. Slide 12 from the March 24 Nicor Gas Presentation – How were the assumptions estimated? For the proportion for large C&I customers that opted out?
2. Slide 18 from the March 24 Nicor Gas Presentation – There is an increase in portfolio management and portfolio marketing costs. What specific activities led to the increase, from the approved plan to the revised plan?
3. Slide 19 from the March 24 Nicor Gas Presentation – There are significantly increased TRCs. What is driving those variations in TRC across the programs?

### **Illinois Office of the Attorney General Feedback to Nicor Gas**

*Abigail Miner, Office of the Illinois Attorney General*

AG Priorities for Nicor 2027-2029 EE Plans

1. Do not increase portfolio-level budget or individual components of portfolio-level budget (EM&V, administration, MDI) beyond what the company originally budgeted for 2026-29.
2. Focus on measures with greatest customer bill impacts. Exclusively allocate additional budget to incentive spending (customer-facing programs), prioritizing programs and specific measures with greatest customer bill impacts.

3. Include total number of participating customers, including the deduplicated number of unique participants and estimates of number of participants in programs with unknown customers, in quarterly spreadsheets and annual reports.

#### AG Priority for 2027-29 Negotiations with Nicor

- Parties agree that negotiations are exclusively to make conforming changes with CRGA and not to re-negotiate elements of initial 2026-29 Plan unaffected by CRGA.

#### More information needed, specifically:

- All information presented in comparison to approved 2026-29 Plan
  - Redline copies of 2026-29 stipulation and plan preferred. March 24 presentation already included some comparisons. Thank you, this is helpful.
- Explanation and calculation of anticipated savings
  - Savings targets workpaper.
- More program detail
  - Provide program descriptions.
  - Identify program changes.
  - Identify new or resuscitated programs, including Emerging Technology (ET) projects.
- More budget detail
  - Plans for increases to ET, Market Transformation (MT), and Market Development Initiative (MDI)
  - Clarify 2027 budget, including average annual budgets and portfolio level costs as % of total budget.
- More detail of C&I programs compared to past negotiations

#### Budget and Incentive Mechanism

- The Company's proposed budget increase and incentive mechanism represent seismic changes for its EE plan. Extra time is needed for review. The AG is reviewing internally and will provide initial feedback to these elements of the draft revised plan on 4/15.

#### **National Consumer Law Center (NCLC) Feedback to Nicor Gas**

*Karen Lusson, NCLC*

NCLC was not able to present on March 31 due to technical difficulties. NCLC's feedback presentation is posted on the SAG website.

#### **Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) Feedback to Nicor Gas**

*Kari Ross, NRDC and Chris Neme, Energy Futures Group*

#### Overview

- Overall, applaud the increase in program budgets and savings goals. **To understand the impact of this proposed plan revision, we'll need to understand the key measures driving increased savings. As new statute requires prioritizing weatherization and heating load reducing measures, NRDC needs more detail on the proposed level of emphasis on growth in rebates for residential gas equipment vs. weatherization.**
- Settlement discussions should focus on budgets/savings – must retain portfolio provisions in the 2026-2029 plan stipulation unless directly changed by statute.
  - Weatherization protocols, MDI metrics, equipment replacement criteria, etc.

- Only providing high-level comments today as need to see more detail on subprograms and measures before providing definitive feedback.

#### Residential and Income Eligible

- Appreciate the emphasis in IE Wx + MF channels and Home Energy Assessments!
- Proposed Kit program spending ~ doubling in size! School kits remain problematic to NRDC.
- Would like to see new whole building weatherization initiative targeted to 80-300% AMI (Moderate Income). Funds to come from proposed Market Rate Residential bucket.
- **Request more detail on the Smart Neighborhood Builder program and Central Plant Optimization MF program.**

#### Changes to Portfolio-Level Costs

- Largest budget increases from Approved Plan 6 within Portfolio Level Costs are in emerging technology, market transformation, program evaluation and MDI – all of which are increasing proportionally with budget.
  - NRDC doesn't see the need for proportional increases in the first two areas and would rather see more \$ diverted to comprehensive weatherization.
  - Glad to see portfolio admin grew only modestly.
- **What MT and R&D programs/equipment does Nicor expect to fund?**

*Chris Vaughn: Are you inquiring about the cost increase for MT evaluation costs?*

- *Chris Neme: There should be a comma, MT and program evaluation are separate.*
- *Kari Ross: With MT being the largest increase in absolute dollars.*

#### Incentive Mechanism

- Under the Company's proposal, Shareholders get a return regardless of good or bad performance. NRDC feels the reward to shareholders should be tied to performance.
- ROE on amortized EE spend is very uncommon in the industry. It's true that rate impacts are lower in the early years, but they are much bigger in later years.
- NRDC would prefer a simpler annual incentive expressed as a % of spend and tied to actual performance relative to goals – as is the case in the vast majority of jurisdictions that have gas EE performance incentives.

#### Large Customer Opt-Out

- Law shifts from exemption to opt-out.
- **Nicor estimates about ½ of large customer sales will stay in program, increasing the total annual sales eligible for EE programs by about 10%. NRDC is interested in understanding how that was estimated.**
- **NRDC would also like to see the calculations of how that affects available budget.**

### **Closing and Next Steps**

#### **Next Steps for Nicor Gas Revised EE Plan**

- Confidential negotiations between non-financially interested stakeholders and Nicor Gas begin in April.

### Follow-up items for Nicor Gas<sup>1</sup>:

1. ICC Staff Question from Slide 12 of the March 24 Nicor Gas Presentation – How were the assumptions estimated? For the proportion for large C&I customers that opted out?
2. ICC Staff Question from Slide 18 of the March 24 Nicor Gas Presentation – There is an increase in portfolio management and portfolio marketing costs. What specific activities led to the increase, from the approved plan to the revised plan?
3. ICC Staff Question from Slide 19 of the March 24 Nicor Gas Presentation – There are significantly increased TRCs. What is driving those variations in TRC across the programs?
4. Illinois Office of the Attorney General Question: Provide all information presented in comparison to approved 2026-29 Plan. Redline copies of 2026-29 stipulation and plan preferred.
5. Illinois Office of the Attorney General Question: Provide an explanation and calculation of anticipated savings, including the savings targets workpaper.
6. Illinois Office of the Attorney General Question: Provide additional program details, including:
  - a. Program descriptions
  - b. Program changes
  - c. Identify new or resuscitated programs, including Emerging Technology (ET) projects
7. Illinois Office of the Attorney General Question: Provide additional budget details, including:
  - a. Plans for increases to ET, Market Transformation (MT) and Market Development Initiative (MDI)
  - b. Clarify 2027 budget, including average annual budgets and portfolio level costs as % of total budget.
8. Illinois Office of the Attorney General Question: More detail of C&I programs compared to past negotiations may be needed.
9. NRDC Question: To understand the impact of this proposed plan revision, we'll need to understand the key measures driving increased savings.
10. NRDC Question: As the new statute requires prioritizing weatherization and heating load reducing measures, NRDC needs more detail on the proposed level of emphasis on growth in rebates for residential gas equipment vs. weatherization.
11. NRDC Question: Need to see more detail on subprograms and measures before providing definitive feedback.
12. NRDC Question: Request more detail on the Smart Neighborhood Builder program.
13. NRDC Question: Request more detail on the and Central Plant Optimization MF program.
14. NRDC Question: What MT and R&D programs/equipment does Nicor expect to fund?
15. NRDC Questions Regarding Large Customer Opt-Out
  - a. Nicor Gas estimates about ½ of large customer sales will stay in program, increasing the total annual sales eligible for EE programs by about 10%. NRDC is interested in understanding how that was estimated.
  - b. NRDC would like to see the calculations of how that affects available budget.
16. NCLC Question: Is there room for even larger increases in joint weatherization spend given ComEd's revised EE Plan?
17. NCLC Questions Regarding IHWAP-Braided Program:

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<sup>1</sup> The SAG Facilitator reviewed stakeholder presentation to identify follow-up question. Nicor Gas will respond to these follow-up items during negotiations. The SAG Facilitator will check on whether any responses will be shared with SAG.

- a. What is happening with CAA braided budgets? Need an understanding of Nicor Gas braided IHWAP contribution amounts.
  - b. How do all parties work together with the state and CEDA to increase budget allocated to the braided weatherization program? (If you build it, will they come in terms of capacity?)
18. NCLC Question: Regarding budget allocations to Emerging Tech, Market Transformation and Evaluation, why propose maximum spend amounts? These can be reduced.
19. NCLC Question: Does Nicor Gas agree we are not starting negotiations “from scratch”?