

April 28th, 2025

Illinois Pollution Control Board
60 E Van Buren St, Ste. 630
Chicago, IL 60605
2520 W Iles Ave
Springfield, IL 62702

Submitted via email to Clerk Don Brown (Don.Brown@illinois.gov)

Re: Proposed Clean Car and Truck Standards (R2024-017)

To the members of the Pollution Control Board:

My name is Brian Urbaszewski, and I serve as the Director of Environmental Health Programs at Respiratory Health Association (RHA), a Chicago-based public health nonprofit dedicated to preventing lung disease, promoting clean air, and improving lives through education, research, and policy advocacy. Last September, I submitted prefiled testified in this matter in strong support of all three Proposed Rules. With over 30 years of experience in environmental policy—including more than 25 years in my current role—I have played a lead role in RHA's advocacy efforts before the Illinois General Assembly, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), and the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) to address a wide range of air quality and public health concerns, and am thus well qualified to speak to the readiness of Illinois to adopt the Proposed Rules.

Section V of my prefiled testimony is titled, "Public and Private Investments in Electric Vehicles In-State Make Illinois Ready for the Rules." In that section, I testified "to the significant investments in recent years in light-, medium-, and heavy-duty charging infrastructure by the federal government, state of Illinois, and regulated utilities."¹ Today, I submit the following comment to provide factual updates related to trends and programs addressed in my prefiled testimony, which continue to demonstrate that Illinois is in a strong position to adopt the Proposed Rules. Not only does the State of Illinois remain committed to cleaner transportation, but, furthermore, funding for these electrification commitments remains largely intact, available, and ready for deployment despite broader federal funding uncertainty caused by the current federal administration.

In my original testimony, I discussed how Illinois is already laying the groundwork for successful implementation of Proposed Rules through substantial investments in electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure. These investments come from all levels of government and include private sector support as well. I highlighted the hundreds of millions of dollars committed by the state of Illinois, including funding through the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA), from the

Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust fund (the “VW settlement,” created from a comprehensive multi-state settlement with Volkswagen over Clean Air Act violations), and the Illinois state budget – none of which can be threatened by the current federal administration. I also emphasized the contributions of regulated utilities like ComEd and Ameren through the state-mandated Beneficial Electrification Plan process. In addition, I discussed how major private companies, public agencies, and school districts are independently investing in electric vehicle fleets and infrastructure.

In this comment, I provide up-to-date perspective and information that shows Illinois has both the state policy framework and financial resources to move forward confidently with EV adoption, with or without additional federal support from the current administration.

Since the Rule Proponents’ regulatory proposal was submitted last June, Illinois has remained firmly committed to expanding its EV charging network—guided by clear goals, strong partnerships, and broad public support – without effect from what goes on in Washington. The Board should move forward in confidence, too, in part because funding mechanisms in Illinois remain largely intact and insulated from federal disruptions while the public health effects of vehicle pollution remain a pernicious and deadly public health crisis.

The Rule Proponents’ regulatory proposal anticipated several key investments in EV charging infrastructure; overwhelmingly, these projects remain on solid financial footing. **The following projects, mentioned in my Prefiled Testimony, have firmly secured federal funding:**

- The \$14.9 million awarded to the Illinois Finance Authority through the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) from federal Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) funds for public EV charging is fully obligated and available to be spent.²
- The \$7.1 million awarded to the Illinois Department of Transportation through the Federal Highway Administration's Electric Vehicle Charger Reliability and Accessibility Program to repair, replace or upgrade an estimated 93 Level 2 ports and 34 Direct Current Fast Charging (DCFC) ports across the state is firmly in place.³
- After announcing the availability of \$50m in a Notice of Funding Opportunity in March 2024, \$25.3 million in National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) funds were awarded by Governor Pritzker in September 2024 as grants to build charging stations along interstate corridors through the initial round of funding made available

² State of Ill., “Gov. Pritzker Announces \$14.9M in Federal Funding for Illinois' Community Charging Program,” (Jan. 11, 2024), <https://www.illinois.gov/news/press-release.29498.html>; see also Rule Proponents’ Prefiled Testimony at 135 n. 11.

³ Ill. Dep’t of Transp., “IDOT awarded \$7.1 million in federal funds to fix, replace electric vehicle chargers across state,” (Jan. 19, 2024), <https://idot.illinois.gov/news/press-release.29534.html>; see also Rule Proponents’ Prefiled Testimony at 136 n. 18.

from the NEVI Program.⁴ A total of 37 projects throughout the state were chosen in this first round of NEVI funding, which will facilitate the construction of 182 new fast charging ports. IDOT initiated the round 2 funding process for NEVI in November 2024 and closed the submission of applications on January 31, 2025. Though there are administrative and timing questions related to the disbursement of NEVI funds to which Illinois has a statutory entitlement, only that NEVI funding awarded for Fiscal Year 2026 – the final year of Illinois’ five-year award – are not committed with certainty to Illinois.⁵

Even in areas where future federal funding streams remain in flux, recent developments suggest continued optimism for Illinois. Based on my personal conversations with staff at IEPA responsible for administering grant programs, such as those related to EV purchase support and charging buildout, **the following funds either continue to be available or are expected to be available shortly:**

- In the past two weeks, state officials met with the U.S. EPA regarding the \$115 million portion of the \$430 million Climate Pollution Reduction Grant awarded to Illinois in June 2024—funding referenced in my prefiled testimony.⁶ Based on those discussions, the state appears well-positioned to begin putting that money to use in the near term.
- In Illinois, the U.S. EPA Clean School Bus Program is poised to replace 450 diesel school buses. At the time of Rule Proponents’ regulatory proposal, organizations and school districts in Illinois had received over \$169 million in funds.⁷ Round 3 Clean School Bus Program funds have started appearing in other states, and I understand from personal communication that Illinois is expected to receive further awards from that round of funding soon.

Additionally, the U.S. EPA awarded Illinois a total of \$95 million through the Clean Ports Program in late 2024.⁸ Based on my conversations with funding administrators at IEPA

⁴ Ill Dep’t of Transp., “Gov. Pritzker Announces \$25.3 Million Investment in Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure”, (Sep. 9, 2024), <https://illinois-department-of-transportation.prezly.com/gov-pritzker-announces-253-million-investment-in-electric-vehicle-charging-infrastructure>. See Rule Proponents’ Prefiled Testimony at 135 n. 11, citing Ill. Dep’t of Transp., Notice of Funding Opportunity, (Mar. 2024), https://idot.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/idot/documents/transportation-system/planning/driveelectric/IDOT_NEVI_NOFO_FINAL.pdf, for reference to the March 2024 announcement of \$50 million in funding.

⁵ See U.S. Dep’t of Transp., Letter to State Department of Transportation Directors (Feb. 6, 2025), <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/nevi/resources/state-plan-approval-suspension.pdf>.

⁶ Ill. EPA, “State of Illinois: Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Implementation Grant,” (April 1, 2024), <https://epa.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/epa/topics/climate/documents/soi-cprg-implementation-grant.pdf> (“Ill. EPA CPRG”); see also Rule Proponents’ Prefiled Testimony at 136 n. 13.

⁷ U.S. EPA, Clean School Bus Program, (May 29, 2024), <https://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus>. See also U.S. EPA, Clean School Bus Program Awards, (May 30, 2024), <https://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus/cleanschool-bus-program-awards>. See also Rule Proponents’ Proposed Clean Car and Truck Standards, Statement of Reasons at 58.

⁸ State of Ill., “Gov. Pritzker Joins U.S. EPA to Announce Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Grants for Illinois,” (Nov. 15, 2024), <https://gov-pritzker-newsroom.prezly.com/gov-pritzker-joins-us-epa-to-announce-clean-energy-and-pollution-reduction-grants-for-illinois>.

earlier this month, the Notice of Funding Opportunity for this award is drafted and soon to be announced, meaning IEPA is preparing to distribute this money shortly.

To the best of my knowledge, the only previously awarded federal funding which is uncertain to be received is related to the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure grant program (CFI program) administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). Previously, the U.S. DOT awarded \$100 million to IEPA and \$14 million to the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus for a total award of \$114 million to support new electric vehicle charging stations across Illinois.⁹ Since this additional federal funding award was announced on January 10th, 2025, it postdates my testimony and was not among the resources mentioned therein. Based on recent conversations I've had with the Illinois recipients of this funding, a funding agreement has not been finalized and there is thus no mechanism yet for IEPA or the Mayors Caucus to access these funds. **However, the complementary \$39 million awarded in state funding through the Driving a Cleaner Illinois Program, slated to build 1,476 charging stations at 242 locations in Illinois, is not tied to federal grants and remains fully available.**

Importantly, there are a number of investments that have been made by the state of Illinois and regulated utilities that are entirely immune from the federal administration. For example, the following investments by the state and utility companies remain active and funded:

- Illinois has made a commitment of \$70 million in state capital funds to EV charging grants.¹⁰
- VW Settlement funding is not connected to the federal budget process and remains completely undisturbed. Not only do previous awards of VW Settlement money continue to fund EV-related infrastructure projects, such as IEPA's award of \$12.6 million for an initial wave of EV chargers,¹¹ but additional funding continues to be awarded from this source. For example, on February 7, 2025, the IEPA released \$58 million in VW settlement funds to CTA and Pace to purchase 57 electric transit buses,¹² and on March 19, 2025, the agency made an additional \$20 million in VW settlement funding available to replace Class 4–8 trucks with electric models.¹³
- CEJA requires, by statute, that utility companies develop Beneficial Electrification (BE) Plans every three years which include significant investments by utilities in EV charging equipment.¹⁴ I previously noted that, through the CEJA Beneficial Electrification Plan (BE Plan), ComEd made \$5 million available in February 2024—

⁹ State of Ill., "Gov. Pritzker Announces New Electric Vehicle Charging Wins for Illinois," (Jan. 10, 2025), <https://gov-pritzker-newsroom.prezly.com/gov-pritzker-announces-new-electric-vehicle-charging-wins-for-illinois>.

¹⁰ Pub. Act 101-0029, 101st Gen. Assemb., (Ill. 2019); *see also* Rule Proponents' Prefiled Testimony at 135 n. 11.

¹¹ John Pletz, "Illinois EPA awards \$12.6M to build initial wave of EV chargers," (June 5, 2023), <https://www.chicagobusiness.com/technology/illinoisepa-awards-126m-build-ev-chargers>; *see also* Rule Proponents' Prefiled Testimony at 135 n. 11.

¹² David Struett, "CTA, Pace get jolt to electric bus fleets with new state EPA grant to buy 57 battery-powered vehicles" (Feb. 7, 2025) <https://chicago.suntimes.com/transportation/2025/02/07/electric-bus-cta-pace-illinois-epa-pritzker>.

¹³ State of Ill., "Illinois EPA Announces \$20 Million Notice of Funding Opportunity for Electric Class 4-8 Local Freight Trucks" (March 19, 2025), <https://gov.illinois.gov/news/press-release.31052.html>.

¹⁴ 20 ILCS 627/45.

and has another \$5 million approved for 2025—for consumer rebates toward residential EV charger installations, while also offering \$30 million in 2024 in "make-ready" rebates to businesses and governments to support the electrical preparation needed for EV charging equipment, though not covering the chargers themselves.¹⁵ In February 2025, ComEd announced BE program funding which includes \$38 million being made available for "make-ready" rebates and \$9 million available for consumer rebates toward residential EV charger installations.¹⁶ And ComEd's next BE Plan was approved on March 27th, paving the way for additional EV and EV infrastructure funding in 2026–2028 that is independent of any federal funding decisions.¹⁷ ComEd's Commercial and Industrial (C&I) and Public Sector EV Purchase Sub-program allocates \$28.5 million per year, on average, for C&I and public sector customer rebates for the purchase of electric fleet vehicles – including medium- and heavy-duty EVs – with over \$85 million allocated in total. ComEd's C&I program rebates especially help commercial and industrial purchasers to shift their medium- and heavy-duty vehicle fleets to EVs. The utility's C&I and Public Sector EV Make-Ready Sub-program budgets approximately \$15.6 million per year on average for this Program (over \$46 million in total). Likewise, ComEd's Residential EV Charger and Installation Program, designed to incentivize the purchase and installation of residential EV charging infrastructure, has an approved average annual budget of \$3.7 million per year (\$11 million in total).

- Similarly, Ameren's next BE Plan was also approved on March 27th program and includes over \$50 million in total for its ChargeReady program, which provides incentives for charging equipment and its installation.¹⁸ Residential customers, C&I customers, and schools as well as public, corridor, and transit facilities are all eligible to take service under the ChargeSmart Program. This Program also provides incentives to residential customers to cover the costs of charging equipment and installation for ChargeSmart subscribers in equity eligible areas that can cover 100 percent of installation and equipment costs. Combined, the Ameren and ComEd BE total program spending will be over \$250m over the next three years of 2026-28.

In conclusion, Illinois is well-positioned to keep moving forward with an aggressive approach to the EV transition. Most funding for EV projects remains secure, even as some federal programs face delays or uncertainty. The state has strong support from both state and

¹⁵ Final Order, Commonwealth Edison Company Petition for Approval of Beneficial Electrification Plan, Ill. Commerce Comm'n 22-0432 & 22-0442 (cons.) (Mar. 23, 2023), at 68–69. *See also* ComEd, BE Plan, (compliance filing May 2023), <https://icc.illinois.gov/downloads/public/edocket/589765.PDF>. *See also* Rule Proponents' Prefiled Testimony at 137 n. 19.

¹⁶ Business Wire, "ComEd Announces \$100 Million in EV Rebates Now Available to Boost Charging and EV Adoption Across Northern Illinois" (Feb. 6, 2025), <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20250206067707/en/ComEd-Announces-%24100-Million-in-EV-Rebates-Now-Available-to-Boost-Charging-and-EV-Adoption-Across-Northern-Illinois>.

¹⁷ Final Order, Commonwealth Edison Company Petition for Approval of Beneficial Electrification Plan, Ill. Commerce Comm'n 24-0484 & 24-0577 (cons.) (Mar. 27, 2025), <https://www.icc.illinois.gov/docket/P2024-0484/documents/363213/files/636050.pdf>.

¹⁸ Final Order, Ameren Illinois Petition for Approval of Beneficial Electrification Plan 2, Ill. Commerce Comm'n 24-0494 & 24-0578 (cons.) (Mar. 27, 2025), <https://www.icc.illinois.gov/docket/P2024-0494/documents/363210/files/636045.pdf>.

utility programs that are not tied to federal decisions, helping ensure continued progress. With robust reliable funding, clear plans, and strong local commitment, the Board can move ahead to promulgate the Proposed Rules with confidence.

It is important to remember that the harmful emissions from vehicle tailpipes lead to harmful human health impacts and billions in economic loss every year, creating a health crisis – especially in lower-income communities and communities of color – from which the Board is authorized and obligated to protect the public.¹⁹ Recently, an American Lung Association study gave 21 out of 23 graded Illinois counties an “F” for high ozone days, while an updated April 2025 Clean Air Task Force analysis focusing on projected 2026 emissions indicated that Illinoisians faced the second highest cancer risk from diesel soot for states within the continental U.S.²⁰ These are only the latest additions to a staggering body of research, analysis, and observation detailing the acute health impacts of vehicle-emitted pollutants. As the federal administration threatens to roll back existing tailpipe emissions standards,²¹ the Board’s responsibility to “restore, maintain, and enhance the purity of the air of this State in order to protect health, welfare, property, and the quality of life”²² becomes all the greater. I urge the Board to adopt all three of the Proposed Rules for the sake of our state and the health of its residents.



Brian Urbaszewski

¹⁹ See Rule Proponents’ Prefiled Testimony at 140-148 (my prefiled testimony discussing the negative effects of vehicle pollution in the state of Illinois based on my experience with the Respiratory Health Association).

²⁰ American Lung Association, *State of the Air 2025: Illinois*, <https://www.lung.org/research/sota/city-rankings/states/illinois> (last visited Apr. 23, 2025); see also American Lung Association, *State of the Air* (2025), <https://www.lung.org/getmedia/5d8035e5-4e86-4205-b408-865550860783/State-of-the-Air-2025.pdf>; Clean Air Task Force, *Deaths by Dirty Diesel*, <https://www.catf.us/deathsbydiesel/> (last visited Apr. 23, 2025); Veronica Saltzman, Tom Walker & John Graham, *The Advanced Clean Trucks Rule Saves Lives, So Why Is Congress Trying to Axe It?*, Clean Air Task Force (Apr. 23, 2025), <https://www.catf.us/2025/04/advanced-clean-trucks-rule-saves-lives-why-congress-trying-axe-it/>.

²¹ U.S. Env’tl. Prot. Agency, *EPA Launches Biggest Deregulatory Action in U.S. History* (Mar. 12, 2025), <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-launches-biggest-deregulatory-action-us-history>.

²² 415 ILCS 5/8.