

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



**CAPITOL OFFICE**  
263-S Stratton Building  
Springfield, Illinois 62706  
217-782-5970 Fax 217-558-1253

**DISTRICT OFFICE**  
County Office Building  
1504 3rd Ave.  
Rock Island, Illinois 61201  
309-558-3612 Fax 309-793-4764

**PATRICK J. VERSCHOORE**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
72<sup>ND</sup> DISTRICT

John Therriault, Clerk  
Illinois Pollution Control Board  
James R. Thompson Center  
100 West Randolph Street, Suite 11-500  
Chicago IL 60601

*PC# 3914*

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OCT 21 2015

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
Pollution Control Board

RE: Coal Combustion Waste (CCW) Ash Ponds and Surface Impoundments at Power Generating Facilities: Proposed New 35 Ill. Adm. Code 841 (R14-10)

Illinois Pollution Control Board Members:

As a State Representative and Chairman of the Environment Committee, I wanted to take a moment to offer my support for the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) motion requesting an indefinite stay of the IEPA's proposed rule on Coal Combustion Waste (CCW), And offer my support for the balanced approach that the IEPA has taken with regards to this issue. The IEPA and Illinois Pollution Control Board are given the difficult task of balancing state And federal policy options while considering the impact upon the public as well as economic impacts. Given the need for additional clarity regarding the federal rule, the State's existing ability to appropriately regulate existing coal combustion waste sites, and the potential cost implications to coal fired-power plant operators ultimately consumers, I respectfully request that the Board grant the Agency's motion.

On August 5, 2015, the Agency filed a motion asking the Board to indefinitely extend the rulemaking stay it initially granted on May 7, 2015. The Agency's motion stated an indefinite stay will "enable the Illinois EPA and other interested parties to comprehensively evaluate the impact of the relevant ongoing litigation and Congressional actions on the proposed rulemaking, once those matters are resolved." The "matters" contemplated by the Agency are ongoing litigation of the USEPA Coal Combustion Residual (CCR) rule and Congressional legislation that could change the scope and content of the proposed rule presently before the Board.

During the requested evaluation period, the Agency will continue to address and resolve groundwater violations in Illinois under the Groundwater Protection Act and the groundwater 35 IAC 620 regulations. The IEPA has testified to the Board that nearly all the existing coal combustion residual impoundments in Illinois are subject to some sort of IEPA oversight, wither through active enforcement actions or approval and management of groundwater

management zones. The Agency can and has used its authority and rules to close existing ash ponds, and will be able to continue following this process at facilities covered by or exempt from the federal CCR rule. Therefore, there is no gap in groundwater protection regulations that warrants the Board to expedite this rulemaking process. Even if the Board decides a new rule is warranted, the Board should not make substantive changes to the proposed rule without allowing the regulated community and members of the public a meaningful opportunity to comment on the changes. The worst possible outcome would be the creation of either duplicative or inconsistent regulatory requirements on the affected facilities in Illinois resulting in greater costs and additional administrative requirements with no environmental benefit.

The Board should also deny the Environmental Groups' motion to amend the Agency's proposal. Specifically, the Environmental Group ask that the Board reopen the stayed rulemaking in order to accept comments on the Environmental Groups' amended proposal. What the Environmental Groups have proposed is contrary to Section 27 of the Illinois Environmental Protection Act, which requires "information supporting the requested change.....and describe, to the extent reasonable practicable, the universe of affected sources and facilities and the economic impact of the proposed rule" and the technical feasibility and economic reasonableness of measuring or reducing the particular type of pollution.

I support the Board granting the stay, as requested by the Agency, because granting as indefinite stay will allow the IEPA and other parties to assess the impact of the federal CCR rule and pending legal and legislative matters on the Part 841 Rulemaking and will avoid inconsistent and unnecessary regulatory requirements and increased compliance costs on Illinois facilities.

In the event that the Board declines to grant the Agency's motion to extend the stay indefinitely, it would also be inappropriate for the Board to grant the Environmental Groups' motion. I request that the Board deny the Environmental Groups' motion but, should it grant the motion, the Board should schedule hearings on the amended proposal and require the Environmental Groups to provide adequate testimonial support and evidence and answer questions related to its amended proposal consistent with Section 27 of the Illinois Environmental Protection Act.

I appreciate your time and consideration of my comments as a member of the General Assembly.

Sincerely,



Pat Verschoore

State Representative

72<sup>nd</sup> District