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### **Stakeholders Invited to Join NextGrid: Illinois' Utility of the Future Study**

Chicago, IL...The Illinois Commerce Commission in consultation with the lead facilitators from the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) invite interested stakeholders to participate or recommend representatives to participate in the NextGrid: Illinois' Utility of the Future study. NextGrid is a consumer-focused study to transform Illinois' energy landscape and economy.

Nominations are being accepted now for the first NextGrid working group, "New Technology Deployment and Grid Integration." This working group will explore the capabilities of emerging technologies, including distributed energy resources (DERs) and electric vehicles, and their integration into the electric grid. This working group will also examine the role of a distribution system operator in managing new technology integration and system planning and will survey methodologies for valuing new technology impacts to the distribution system, the environment, and the customer.

The first meeting of this working group will be held on November 17, 2017 from 1:00 – 4:00 pm at the Illinois Commerce Commission's main hearing room in Chicago. The working group will be led by Mohammad Shahidepour, Ph.D., Distinguished Bodine Chair Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Director of the Robert W. Galvin Center for Electricity Innovation, and Associate Director of the Wanger Institute for Sustainability and Energy Research at the Illinois Institute of Technology.

In total, seven working groups have been identified to meet regularly, develop a shared base of information, and build consensus on critical issues facing the electric utility industry now and as it continues to rapidly transform. The groups include: New Technology Deployment and Grid Integration; Electricity Markets; Customer and Community Participation; Regulatory, Environmental and Policy Issues; Metering, Communications and Data; Reliability, Resiliency and Cyber Security; and Ratemaking.

The work completed by the working groups will lead to a comprehensive final report compiled by the UIUC that will outline opportunities and challenges, identify areas of consensus and disagreement, educate policymakers, and provide a range of recommendations aimed at empowering customers and communities, driving economic development, and creating a regulatory model that supports innovation and optimizes the electric utility industry for all constituents.

“Our intention is for the working groups to be diverse and representative of the stakeholders in the energy community, while still being manageable in size to encourage productivity,” said Illinois Commerce Commission Chairman Brien J. Sheahan. “It is important for all stakeholders and interested parties to have a voice in the process. While it is not possible for everyone to serve on a working group, we are also welcoming feedback on the various agendas and topics of discussion that can be submitted through the NextGrid website.”

If you would like to participate in or recommend a working group member, such as a company or individual, please fill out the form [here](#) or the visit the NextGrid website’s [Working Groups page](#). Nominations must be submitted by November 6, 2017 at 5:00 pm EST to be considered for the first working group.

The ICC and UIUC will determine the final working groups participants. Nominated individuals or companies who are not included in the working groups will be encouraged to participate in the study by reviewing the working group agendas and offering feedback on the topics. As we move through the process, there will be ample opportunities for individuals and organizations to offer their perspective and suggestions by sending comments to [icc.NextGrid@illinois.gov](mailto:icc.NextGrid@illinois.gov). Please visit the NextGrid website, [www.nextgrid.illinois.gov](http://www.nextgrid.illinois.gov) to find pertinent information and study updates.

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#### About the Illinois Commerce Commission

The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) is a quasi-judicial body made up of five Commissioners. Through its Public Utility Program, the Commission oversees the provision of adequate, reliable, efficient and safe utility services at the least possible cost to Illinois citizens served by electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water and sewer public utility companies. Through its Transportation Regulatory Program, the Commission oversees public safety and consumer protection programs with regard to intrastate commercial motor carriers of general freight, household goods movers, relocation towers, safety towers, personal property warehouses and repossession agencies. The Commission’s Rail Safety Program also inspects and regulates the general safety of railroad tracks, facilities and equipment in the state.

To learn more about the Commission, its offices and bureaus, click [here](#). If you are a consumer who needs help resolving a utility dispute call 800-524-0795 or file an online complaint [here](#). For a complaint related to transportation, call 217-782-6448.

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