

**Volume 234 May 17 2011**

**Opposition growing to bill that would allow automatic rate hikes by Ameren & ComEd**

The battle over reshaping the way Central Illinois families and businesses are charged for electric and natural gas service is coming down to the wire with no clear winner in sight. At issue is House Bill 14 in the state legislature that would allow Ameren Illinois and Commonwealth Edison to receive annual delivery cost rate hikes for electricity and natural gas that would be subject to review only after they go into effect.

The current system requires a utility to file a complex rate case first and then wait about a year while it is dissected in public hearings before being ruled on by the Illinois Commerce Commission, the state's rate regulators. Only then does the ICC decide precisely how much more cash the utility is allowed to earn, if any, and the corresponding rates set.

Critics such as AARP claim the new rate system proposed in House Bill 14 is an ATM machine for utilities to profit from built-in rate hikes. Ameren Illinois responds by saying the new legislation would drag an archaic rate system into the 21st century and, even though it would be done retroactively, the new rates are still subject to review by the ICC, which could compel perceived overcharges be refunded with interest.

Lawmakers are expected to vote on the bill before their hectic spring session closes at the end of the month. Gov. Pat Quinn has warned he will veto the proposed law as it stands.

But the bill's stance may be undergoing some voltage fluctuations. An amended version is in the works that apparently would make the bill more palatable to the governor and other critics. This tweaked version wasn't made public as of Thursday, but opponents already fear it will offer only cosmetic alterations in an attempt to make Quinn put down his veto pen.

**Extended Temp Forecast: Chicago Area**

<b>Tue</b>	<b>Wed</b>	<b>Thu</b>	<b>Fri</b>	<b>Sat</b>
<b>43 - 55</b>	<b>46 - 55</b>	<b>48 - 62</b>	<b>54 - 70</b>	<b>58 - 71</b>

**Electricity Pricing Areas – On Peak June 2011**

	<b>May 10, 2011</b>	<b>Per kWh</b>
<b>Cinergy</b>	<b>Hub Peak Swap Monthly</b>	<b>\$.04268</b>
<b>PJM Hub</b>	<b>Electricity Monthly</b>	<b>\$.05474</b>
<b>PJM</b>	<b>No. Illinois Peak LMP</b>	<b>\$.04371</b>
<b>PJM</b>	<b>Western Peak LMP</b>	<b>\$.05474</b>

**ComEd Average Day Ahead LMP Electric Price**

<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Average per Kwh</b>
<b>Jun 1- Jun 30, 2010</b>	<b>\$.04184</b>
<b>Jul 1 - Jul 31</b>	<b>\$.04741</b>
<b>Aug 1 -Aug 31</b>	<b>\$.04628</b>
<b>Sep 1 - Sep 30</b>	<b>\$.02934</b>
<b>Oct 1 - Oct 31</b>	<b>\$.02702</b>
<b>Nov 1 - Nov 30</b>	<b>\$.02778</b>
<b>Dec 1 - Dec 31</b>	<b>\$.03545</b>
<b>Jan 1 -Jan 31, 2011</b>	<b>\$.03871</b>
<b>Feb 1 - Feb 28</b>	<b>\$.03581</b>
<b>March 1- Mar 31</b>	<b>\$.03668</b>
<b>April 1 - April 30</b>	<b>\$.03448</b>
<b>May thru May 16</b>	<b>\$.03861</b>

**Weather - Tue:** Windy with a mix of clouds and sun. High around 55F. Winds NNE at 20 to 30 mph. **Wed:** Cloudy with a few showers. High 54F. Winds NNE at 10 to 20 mph. Chance of rain 30%. **Thu:** Occasional showers possible. Highs in the upper 50s and lows in the upper 40s. **Fri:** Clouds giving way to sun . Highs in the upper 60s and lows in the mid 50s. **Sat:** Few showers. Highs in the low 70s and lows in the upper 50s.

