



# CUBFacts<sup>Electric</sup>

## The Illinois Commerce Commission

### What is the ICC?

The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) is a state agency that regulates investor-owned electric, natural gas, telephone, and water utilities. The ICC, with a budget of about \$118 million and a staff of nearly 300, determines rates and regulatory policy in the state. The five ICC commissioners are appointed by the governor and approved by the state Senate for five-year terms. The governor also appoints one commissioner to be ICC chairman.

### What does the ICC do?

The ICC conducts hearings on utility rates and service, audits utility-company operations, and investigates consumer complaints against public utilities. In cases before the ICC, an “administrative law judge” will spend months listening to expert testimony and legal arguments—filed by parties in the case such as CUB, other consumer advocates, the utilities, and the ICC’s own staff—before making a recommendation concerning utility rates or service. The five commissioners will then consider the judge’s recommendation and make a final ruling.

CUB can initiate proceedings by filing a complaint against a utility; or it can “intervene” in a proceeding to argue for lower rates and pro-consumer policies. The utility companies also may intervene in cases, or they can initiate one by, for example, formally proposing a rate increase.

### How is the ICC funded?

A tax of about .1 percent on utility bills helps fund the commission. Commissioners’ salaries are about \$117,000 a year, while the chairman makes about \$134,000 a year.

### How do I contact the ICC?

You can file a complaint against a utility company by calling the ICC at 1-800-524-0795, or go to [www.icc.illinois.gov](http://www.icc.illinois.gov).

[icc.illinois.gov](http://www.icc.illinois.gov). However, before calling the ICC, bring your utility complaint to CUB, by calling 1-800-669-5556, to find how to get the best results.

### Who are the ICC Commissioners?

#### Chairman Manuel Flores:

Gov. Pat Quinn appointed Chairman Flores in 2010. Flores is a former Alderman of Chicago’s 1st Ward. He also served as a prosecutor in the Office of the Cook County State’s Attorney. Flores replaced Chairman Charles Box, whose term expired in 2009.

#### Commissioner Lula M. Ford:

Commissioner Ford was appointed to the ICC in 2003. She was reappointed to a second term in 2008, expiring in 2013. Ford has served as assistant director for Central Management Services, and before that as a teacher, principal, and assistant superintendent of Chicago Public Schools.

#### Commissioner John T. Colgan:

Gov. Quinn appointed Commissioner Colgan in 2009 to replace Commissioner Robert F. Lieberman. Prior to serving on the ICC, Colgan served as the founding executive director of the Illinois Hunger Coalition, and later at the Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies (IACAA). Colgan co-authored the Affordable Energy Plan, which helped bring rate relief to low-income families, seniors and those on fixed incomes.

#### Commissioner Erin M. O’Connell-Diaz:

Commissioner O’Connell-Diaz was appointed to the Commission in 2003. She was reappointed to a second term in 2008, expiring in 2013. In the past, she has served as an assistant attorney general and an administrative law judge for the ICC.

#### Commissioner Sherman J. Elliot:

Commissioner Elliot was appointed to the ICC in 2007. His term expires in 2012. In the past, Elliot served as manager of State Regulatory Affairs for Midwest ISO and as a senior energy policy advisor and senior economist for the ICC.