

March 20, 2026

Illinois Power Agency  
160 North LaSalle Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Subject: Comments on the Illinois Shines 2026 Draft Program Guidebook

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**COMMENTS BY CARBON SOLUTIONS GROUP**

Carbon Solutions Group (“CSG”) appreciates the opportunity to comment before the Illinois Power Agency (“the Agency”). This comment letter will address the Agency’s 2026 Draft Program Guidebook (“Draft Guidebook”) , with a focus on the following topics:

- I. Nested Designee registration requirements
- II. Part I Application upload requirements
- III. Relief for Abandoned Contracts definition of “Reasonable Effort”

**Nested Designee registration requirements: Section 2G**

CSG appreciates the Program’s dedication to consumer protection measures and agrees that requiring Designee registration prior to performing work for their Approved Vendors is an important step in maintaining program oversight. However, CSG believes that the current registration process creates a gap in the Agency’s stated supervision expectations, specifically for Approved Vendors.

The Draft Guidebook states that “Approved Vendors will be responsible for ensuring that their Designee(s) register with the Program before performing any work on behalf of the Approved Vendor and annually renew their registration, and Approved Vendors who fail to do so may be subject to disciplinary actions. This includes Designees of Designees (Nested Designees).” (Draft Guidebook at 53). This creates a situation where Approved Vendors are held responsible for supervising and tracking Nested Designees that may register without their knowledge.

Historically, it has been challenging for Approved Vendors to ensure their Designees are complying with the request of Approved Vendors to notify them of the registered Nested Designees. CSG proposes that the Agency mandate that all Nested Designees wishing to register with the ABP be to have all registrations flow through the Approved Vendor via the Parent Designee. Once a Parent Designee notifies the Approved Vendor of their desire to register a Nested Designee, the Approved Vendor will then notify the Program Administrator, who will take the Approved Vendor’s request for the Nested Designee’s registration as the only form of registration approval.

This process allows Approved Vendors to maintain accurate records of their Nested Designees. Without this procedural change, the supervision requirements expected by the Program creates a compliance risk for Approved Vendors who are held responsible for entities operating beyond their reasonable knowledge and ability to monitor.

## **Part I Application Upload Requirements: Section 5F**

### **Contract Uploads**

The Agency proposes Part I required documentation to now include the project's Installation Contract, PPA or lease, along with the customer's REC contract for customer-owned projects (Guidebook at 125). The Agency claims that a use of this new measure is to allow for easier access to relevant documents in the case of customer disputes.

CSG agrees that this can be particularly helpful in increasing communication efficiency, especially in the case where an Approved Vendor or Installer has gone out of business and the original Installation or REC contract is often difficult to obtain. CSG supports this addition to Part I documentation however, CSG notes that the addition of the customer REC contract and Installation contract/PPA/Lease to the Part I documentation package means the Program Administrator will now have up to six potential sources for project information: the customer REC contract, the Installation contract/PPA/Lease Purchase contract, the Plot Diagram or Site Map, the Disclosure Form, Proof of Site Control (if different from REC Contract or PPA/Lease/Purchase contract), and the application data itself, which could conceivably all reflect different system specifications depending on when each document was generated in the project lifecycle.

To avoid delays stemming from discrepancies across these sources, CSG recommends the Program identify which documents will be treated as authoritative for application verification purposes and limit its comparison to those sources. Maintaining the current review scope (the Plot Diagram or Site Map, Proof of Site Control, Disclosure Form, and application data) would help ensure accuracy and minimize back-and-forth, while still allowing the additional contracts to serve their intended purpose of supporting communication efficiency when original project parties are unavailable.

### **DG Notarized Affidavit Requirement**

The Agency proposes requiring the submission of a notarized affidavit to be submitted for all Distributed Generation ("DG") projects in Part I of the ABP application process. As stated in the Draft Guidebook under Part I required uploads, "Notarized affidavit attesting that the project is not affiliated with any other distributed generation projects, such that, if the two projects were deemed co-located, the projects would exceed 5 MW nameplate capacity limitation." (Guidebook at 125).

CSG acknowledges that this requirement is mandated by the IPA Act (20 ILCS 3855/1-75(c)(1)(K)(ii)), as recently amended by Section 247 of P.A. 104-0458. While CSG fully supports complying with legislative requirements, we respectfully believe that the Agency’s proposal to require a notarized affidavit for all Distributed Generation projects imposes an unnecessary administrative and financial burden that goes beyond what the law requires, and fails to align with the practical realities of Illinois’ Solar market, specifically for Small DG and residential systems.

### *Administrative burdening of Small DG and residential systems*

CSG believes that the Agency should exclude systems 25kW AC and under from the notarized affidavit requirement. Most residential systems have no realistic possibility of approaching the 5MW co-location threshold that begins to pose the threat of market manipulation. The vast majority of residential systems are Small DG, being 25kW AC and under. If we assume that a single 5,000 kW AC ground-mount solar system occupies approximately 30 contiguous acres of land<sup>1</sup>, while a standard residential parcel in Illinois is approximately 3100-8700 square feet,<sup>2</sup> approximately 149 suburban lots and more than 500 separate homes controlled by the same affiliate(s), would be required to equal 5MW of co-located projects.

While CSG agrees that anti-gaming measures should be taken seriously, unlike for commercial and community solar systems where exceeding the 5MW threshold in adjoining parcels is physically possible this requirement to Small DG systems adds a disproportionate administrative burden without serving the purpose the law intends. Excluding Small DG from this requirement preserves the anti-gaming intent of the provision for Large DG commercial and community solar while eliminating an unnecessary compliance burden from the residential pipeline.

### **Relief for Abandoned Contracts definition of “Reasonable Effort”: Section 6E**

The Agency proposes the following definition of “reasonable effort” for the purposes of Approved Vendors who are attempting to provide evidence that sufficient communication effort has been made to contact customers to confirm their REC contract has been abandoned in order to request relief in the form of a collateral refund for abandoned contracts: “...multiple methods of communication (phone calls, emails, and mailed letters) over one calendar year. Efforts to contact a customer shall be made at least once every two months, with at least six attempts in a calendar year using alternating methods, unless the customer responds prior to the sixth attempt confirming the Contract has been abandoned. (Draft Guidebook at 143).

CSG finds the Agency's proposed definition reasonable and believes that it strikes an appropriate balance between ensuring AVs have made genuine efforts to make contact with customers while preventing indefinite delays in resolving abandoned contracts statuses.

<sup>1</sup> Figure 3. Distribution of utility-scale PV power density (MW/acre) based on U.S. project footprints (LBNL, 2022).

<sup>2</sup> Standard Chicago lot size. RentCafe / Yardi Matrix. 3,500+ Sq.Ft. Homes Become the Norm in Chicago. June 2022. [rentcafe.com](https://rentcafe.com)

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CSG remains a proud participant in Illinois Shines and we thank the Agency for their consideration of these comments. Please let us know if any further clarification is required.

Respectfully Submitted,

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