



Alton to join hundreds to rally in Springfield for clean energy and climate action for Earth Day

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On Thursday, April 21, a bus of Metro East residents will join citizens from across the state of Illinois will join a rally for clean energy and climate action at the Illinois State Capitol in Springfield. The citizens will be in Springfield to voice support for the bipartisan Illinois Clean Jobs Bill (HB 2607/SB1485), and many of the bill's legislative co-sponsors will rally with citizens outside the Capitol.

Energy policy is among the key issues that have been debated in the Illinois legislature in the past year. In 2015, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency finalized the Clean Power Plan, giving states the opportunity to create plans to cut carbon pollution and grow clean energy jobs.

Illinois, once a clear leader in clean energy jobs in the Midwest, is losing jobs due to broken renewable energy policies. Moreover, if the state's budget impasse is not resolved by May 31, it would mean a loss of \$76 million for energy efficiency projects across Illinois. Schools, libraries and fire stations will receive these funds for energy efficiency upgrades, but will miss out on the funding if no budget is passed.

The Illinois Clean Jobs Bill will strengthen policies to ramp up renewable energy like wind and solar to 35 percent by 2030 and cut energy use through efficiency by 20 percent by 2025. These efforts will save consumers money while bringing clean energy investment to new communities to strengthen local tax bases and create family-sustaining jobs. The bill will also create an estimated 32,000 new jobs annually once fully implemented.

The crowd in Springfield will include faith leaders, students, clean energy businesses, health advocates and many more.