

# Governor signs legislation to protect jobs, ratepayers and taxpayers

December 7 2016 10:39 AM



*Future Energy Jobs bill also supports renewable energy, energy efficiency, and invests in low-income communities*

**PORT BYRON** – Governor Bruce Rauner today signed Senate Bill 2814, the Future Energy Jobs bill, at a ceremony at Riverdale High School in Port Byron. The bipartisan legislation ensures the Quad Cities and Clinton power facilities remain open for another

10 years, saving thousands of good-paying jobs, while protecting working families, seniors, and thousands of other high-quality, good-paying jobs throughout the state by capping residential and business energy rates.

“When this legislation was originally drafted, it was a Christmas tree loaded with special interest goodies that would have skyrocketed energy costs on families and businesses across the state,” said Governor Rauner. “So we needed to find a balance, because I was unwilling to gamble with these communities, gamble with thousands of good paying jobs and gamble with our energy diversity. While this legislation isn’t perfect, it allows us to protect jobs, ratepayers and taxpayers.”

Before Governor Rauner’s involvement, the legislature was poised to pass a massive bill with demand rates that could have skyrocketed energy bills for consumers. Governor Rauner laid out a pathway for a deal with his statement of principles which outlined any energy agreement should preserve jobs while protecting ratepayers and taxpayers.

“Thank you to those who negotiated in good faith to help make this bill a reality, and most importantly, thank you to the people of the Quad Cities and Clinton for your persistence, your patience, and hard work,” Governor Rauner added.

Senate Bill 2814 ensures the Clinton and Quad Cities power facilities remain open for another 10 years. It contains a guaranteed cap that energy prices cannot increase more than 25 cents on the average residential home, and cannot increase more than 1.3 percent on commercial and industrial users over the next ten years. Rates are projected to decrease for the first several years due to the utilities being able to amortize energy efficiency. It also promotes unprecedented wind and solar expansion and preserves zero-emission generation, maintaining Illinois’ status in leading the nation in zero-carbon generation.

"I want to commend Sen. Anderson, as well as every local community leader, who worked diligently to educate both public and policy makers in the Capitol about the important contribution this facility makes to the local electrical supply grid, the regional economy and the state as a whole," said Senate Republican Leader Christine Radogno (R-Lemont).

“A joint study conducted by the Illinois Commerce Commission, the Illinois Power Agency, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity found that allowing several nuclear plants to prematurely close would cause our electric rates to increase by as much as 26% during stress events while grid reliability and capacity would significantly decrease. Closing the plants would also cost Illinois approximately 7,800 jobs and \$1.8 billion in economic activity,” said House Republican Leader Jim Durkin (R-Burr Ridge). “At the

end of the day, had we failed to take action Illinois and Illinois consumers would suffer, and our electric rates would get dramatically out of hand.”

“Getting this bill passed, and saving jobs in the 36th Senate District has been one of my top priorities since taking office almost two years ago. This legislation saves our area from losing more than 800 direct jobs, 1,200 indirect jobs, and the largest property taxpayer in Rock Island County” said State Sen. Neil Anderson (R-Rock Island). “It has been a long and difficult process to pass this legislation, but I’m happy to be able to say we have been successful thanks to negotiations between stakeholders, the General Assembly, and the Governor’s Office.”

“This historic legislation will protect the state’s primary source of clean energy while saving thousands of good jobs at our plants and providing millions of dollars in low-income assistance as well as job training in communities that need it most,” said Chris Crane, president and CEO of Exelon. “We appreciate the leadership of Governor Rauner and legislative leaders for their roles in positioning Illinois to be a national leader in clean energy, job growth and economic development.”

“ICC Staff, including policy analysts, accountants, economists, attorneys and engineers spent a great deal of time analyzing this bill,” said Brien Sheahan, Chairman of the Illinois Commerce Commission. “Our analysis shows the bill not only provides true caps to protect and limit customer rate impacts, but also includes several methods by which the ICC can enforce these caps. We are confident in our ability to oversee the charge this legislation creates for our agency.”

“This is a big win for consumers,” said Dave Kolata, Executive Director of the Citizens Utility Board (CUB). “It’s Economics 101 – reducing demand for electricity also reduces the price. Illinois already enjoys some of the lowest rates in the nation because of energy efficiency, and this bill will drive further savings to homeowners.” According to a CUB analysis, residential consumers will enjoy at least \$4 billion in lower electric bills over the lifetime of the law, which also imposes a cap limiting bill increases to no more than 25-35 cents a month while savings from efficiency ramp up.

“With this legislation, Illinois will now be able to compete head-to-head with any other state in the nation in the race to build a renewable energy economy-- and win,” said Lesley McCain, director of the Illinois Solar Energy Association (ISEA). “This bill will mean more jobs for solar installers, more savings for solar customers and environmental benefits for all of us who gain when cleaner sources of energy are used.”

“With this legislation, Illinois will now be able to compete head-to-head for clean energy jobs with any other state in the nation -- and win,” said Jennifer Walling, Executive Director of the Illinois Environmental Council (IEC), who added “The Future

Energy Jobs bill fixes and improves the broken Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS), leading to \$12 to \$15 billion in private investment and the development of at least 3,000 megawatts of new solar and 1,300 MWs of wind energy— enough to power nearly 1 million homes."

*Video of the event will be posted [here](#).*