

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA)

Hearing Officer Statements

Illinois Regional Haze State Implementation Plan for the Second Implementation Period

Public Hearing February 27, 2024

PLEASE PRESS RECORD. Good evening. The current time is _____ p.m. Central Time.

On behalf of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) and its Director John Kim, welcome to tonight's hearing. My name is Jeff Guy, and I am the Illinois EPA Hearing Officer. We look forward to receiving your comments after the Illinois EPA's opening remarks. If you have connection or audio issues, please attempt to reconnect. Tonight's hearing is being recorded, and the recording link will be posted on the Illinois EPA General Public Notices webpage in the same place where the hearing notice and other pertinent documents have been posted for public review.

The Illinois EPA Bureau of Air is proposing a Regional Haze Plan that will be submitted to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) as a State Implementation Plan revision to address Section 51.308 of Part 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations. The purpose of tonight's hearing is to provide an opportunity for the public to understand and comment on the proposed Regional Haze Plan. Illinois EPA staff will provide more information regarding the Regional Haze Plan momentarily.

Tonight's hearing is being held pursuant to 35 Illinois Administrative Code Part 164. These regulations are available on the Illinois Pollution Control Board website at pcb.illinois.gov. My responsibility as the Hearing Officer is to ensure that this hearing is conducted in a fair and orderly manner according to these regulations.

The Regional Haze Plan, hearing notice, and other pertinent documents & information are available on our General Public Notices webpage. Following the public hearing and public comment period, the Illinois EPA will prepare a "Summary and Agency Statement" that will include a summary

of comments and statements in the hearing record, a response to the comments, and a statement of conclusions, proposed actions, and justifications for the proposed actions. The Summary and Agency Statement will be available on the General Public Notices webpage.

In addition to accepting oral comments this evening, the Illinois EPA is also accepting written comments during the public comment period. As indicated in the hearing notice, written comments must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. Central Time on March 21, 2024, the date in which the hearing record closes. If you would like to provide written comments, please email your comments to EPA.PublicHearingCom@Illinois.gov, as indicated in the hearing notice. Written comments may also be mailed to the Illinois EPA, attention Jeff Guy, Hearing Officer, 1021 North Grand Avenue East, P.O. Box 19276, Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276. Please reference 'Regional Haze Plan' in your written comment. Although we will continue to accept written comments through March 21, 2024, tonight is the only time that we will accept oral comments.

At this time, Illinois EPA staff will introduce themselves and provide information relevant to tonight's hearing. This will be followed by additional instructions from me on how we will receive public comments.

Pursuant to 35 Illinois Administrative Code Part 164, the Hearing Officer is required to read into the record the names and other identifying information of persons who have submitted written statements prior to the hearing. Let the record reflect that a request for extension of the public comment period and a request for this public hearing was submitted to the Illinois EPA by email on January 23, 2024 on behalf of Sierra Club, National Parks Conservation Association, and Coalition to Protect America's National Parks. This document was entered into the hearing record as Exhibit 3.

At this time, we will accept public comments from those that have registered. When I call on you to speak, please ensure to unmute and then state your name and affiliation for the record. For the benefit

of creating an accurate hearing record, please spell your last name. Please keep your comments courteous and on-topic and no longer than five minutes.

At this time, we will accept any other public comments. You can provide comments by using the raise-hand feature on Webex. When I call on you to speak, please ensure to unmute and then state your name and affiliation for the record and spell your last name. When you are finished speaking, please unmute and lower your hand. If you called in, select *3 to raise your hand and *6 to mute and unmute. Please keep your comments courteous and on-topic and no longer than five minutes.

That concludes tonight's public hearing. Thank you for your participation. If you did not present comments but still wish to, please submit written comments to the Illinois EPA by March 21, 2024, as directed in the hearing notice. This is the date in which the hearing record will close. Written comments will be included in the hearing record and reviewed by the Illinois EPA as the Summary and Agency Statement is prepared. Again, pertinent documents are available on the Illinois EPA General Public Notices webpage. You can also obtain documents at the Illinois EPA office located at 1021 North Grand Avenue East, Springfield, Illinois. You can obtain copies of documents through a Freedom of Information Request to the Illinois EPA. This can be done through our website, or you can contact myself directly if you need help with this request. Again, thank you for your participation tonight. The current time is _____ p.m. Central Time and this public hearing is adjourned.

Opening Remarks for Public Hearing

The Regional Haze SIP is intended to satisfy the requirements of the Federal Regional Haze Rule, published by USEPA in 1999 to address visibility impairment in 156 protected parks and wilderness areas. While there are no Class I areas in Illinois, the Regional Haze Rule requires that each state submit a State Implementation Plan (“SIP”) to provide for reasonable progress toward improving visibility, with the eventual goal of achieving natural visibility conditions in these protected areas by 2064. Illinois submitted its SIP for the first implementation period in 2011, which was approved by USEPA in July of 2012. A five-year progress report was also submitted in 2017 and approved by USEPA in April of 2018. This SIP submittal satisfies the requirements for periodic comprehensive revisions to Illinois’ regional haze SIP for the second implementation period, which spans from 2018 to 2028. A progress report for the second period is also due in 2025.

This SIP submittal describes Illinois’ strategy for meeting the reasonable progress goals for the second implementation period by 2028 for Class I areas where emission sources in Illinois have been shown to cause adverse visibility impacts. To address the Regional Haze Rule requirements, Illinois has developed a long-term emission reduction strategy (“LTS”) to address visibility impairment in these nearby Class I areas. The LTS described in this submittal relies mainly on “on-the-books” and “on-the-way measures” that are permanent and enforceable for point and area sources. Illinois has had dramatic reductions in visibility impairing pollutants from EGU and non-EGU sources in the first implementation period SIP submittal and the interim progress report, which will continue into the second implementation period and beyond. These reductions have contributed significantly to visibility improvements at the Class I areas impacted by Illinois emissions, and all of those Class I areas are well ahead of uniform progress goals for visibility for the second implementation period.

Additionally, Illinois has continued to be a leader in the reduction of all pollutants in the EGU sector with the passage of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (“CEJA”) in September of 2021 (415 Illinois Compiled Statutes “ILCS” 5/9.15). CEJA places emission limits on the EGU sector to operate at a reduced allowable capacity, requires the retirement of nearly all coal-fired EGUs by 2030, and subsequent incremental retirements of all remaining coal-fired and gas-fired EGUs by 2045.

The Federal Regional Haze Rule requires consultation between the states, tribes, and Federal Land Managers (“FLMs”) responsible for managing Class I areas. This multi-state and multi-agency consultation process was facilitated by regional planning organizations established specifically for this purpose. Illinois fully participated in the planning and technical development efforts of its planning organization, the Lake Michigan Air Directors Consortium or “LADCO.” Illinois has also participated in consultation with those that have requested Illinois’ participation in their planning process including other planning organizations and states, the USEPA, and representatives from the Federal Land Management agencies including the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and Forest Service. This SIP submittal also documents that process.

Illinois commits to implement the LTS for meeting goals for reasonable progress and other requirements of the Regional Haze Rule. Illinois also commits to maintain adequate monitoring networks, and will continue to provide progress reports, emissions inventories, and future SIP revisions, as required, to meet all requirements of the Regional Haze Rule.

Thank you to all who have joined us for this public hearing, and I look forward to your comments regarding the SIP submittal.