



CITIZENS UTILITY BOARD

Fighting for Illinois Consumers

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CUB CHALLENGES AMEREN'S \$59.6 MILLION ELECTRIC RATE-HIKE REQUEST

A year after receiving a significant electric rate hike, Ameren Illinois is back before state regulators hoping to increase its delivery rates by an extra \$59.6 million, the Citizens Utility Board (CUB) said Monday.

The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) last year approved a \$308.6 million Ameren electric rate increase, phased in over four years, but a provision in state regulatory law allows the utility to petition the ICC to recover extra expenses in yearly “reconciliation” cases, if they go over-budget on capital expenditures.

“We will always challenge wasteful spending by the utilities,” CUB Executive Director Sarah Moskowitz said. “And, while consumer protections have improved, we support ending this reconciliation benefit for utilities. If Ameren blows through its budget in a given year, customers shouldn’t have to pay the excess.”

The ICC rejected Ameren’s first attempt at a four-year rate plan in 2023—in part because the utility didn’t do enough to show how the plan would be affordable or beneficial to customers. Ameren proposed a new plan last year, and the ICC approved a \$308.6 million increase, spread out through 2027. Now, in its reconciliation case ([Docket 25-0382](#)), Ameren wants another \$59.6 million.

Consumer advocates, including CUB and the Illinois Attorney General’s Office, have uncovered at least \$14 million in wasteful spending in Ameren’s reconciliation proposal. Below are examples of unreasonable spending in Ameren’s proposal, CUB argues:

- \$62,928 to cover expensive outside contractors for work on a nearly \$775,000 project that the utility had originally planned to handle internally. (**Note:** Ameren claims CUB should have to prove this spending was unnecessary, but that’s burden-shifting: The utility is the one asking for a legal remedy [more money] and therefore has to explain why it was so necessary to hire outside workers.)
- \$200,000 to cover an unexplained increase in meter-reading expenses. Given that most customers have new digital meters that can be remotely read—as opposed to old meters that require manual reading—these costs should be going down, not up.
- \$10.8 million to “reimburse” Ameren shareholders for employee retirement benefit fund contributions the utility cannot prove its shareholders made. Ameren has repeatedly, and unsuccessfully, tried to foist this expense on customers in regulatory cases. But Ameren, apparently, hasn’t gotten the message and is once again trying to force its customers to foot the bill for this expense.

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In early November, the regulatory judges issued a “proposed order” in the case—which is their recommendation on how the ICC should rule. The proposed order backed about \$9.8 million in reductions for Ameren. The five-member Commission can follow the regulatory judge’s recommendations, or adjust them up or down, as they see fit. The final ruling is expected no later than Dec. 20, with rates taking effect shortly after.

CUB called for Ameren customers to sign a [petition](#) urging regulators to say no to wasteful spending in the reconciliation case.

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For more than 40 years the Citizens Utility Board (CUB) has been Illinois’ leading nonprofit utility watchdog group. Created by the Illinois Legislature, CUB opened its doors in 1984 to represent the interests of residential and small-business utility customers. Since then, CUB has saved consumers more than \$20 billion by helping to block rate hikes and secure refunds. For more information, call CUB’s Consumer Hotline at 1-800-669-5556 or visit CUB’s website, www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org.