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Electrical Work
for Electrical Workers


International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

Local Union No. 176 Joliet, Illinois

June 17, 2021

Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to provide an update on where we are with enacting an energy bill here in Illinois. Along with several others from labor, I have spent a lot of time in Springfield negotiating with representatives from the environmental community, legislators, and the Governor's office in an attempt to come to an agreement on a comprehensive energy bill. Throughout this process, there are three main things that I have been adamant about being included in this legislation: one, keeping our nuclear fleet open and viable; two, that there be strong labor standards such as prevailing wage and project labor agreements on any new renewable projects; and three, that the construction of either of the gas plants, CPV or Jackson Power, in our local not be negatively affected by this legislation.

We have come to a tentative agreement on keeping the nuclear plants open. We are also in a basic agreement on labor standard language with only a few minor tweaks left to work out. Although we had believed we had an agreement on decarbonization language that would not negatively affect the construction of the two gas plants in our local, the Governor's office introduced new decarbonation language at the end of last week that would jeopardize the construction of these plants. This language would impose declining carbon caps on greenhouse gas emissions that would require 20% carbon reduction every five years for every gas plant in the state. After this language was introduced by the Governor, I had conversations with representatives at both CPV and Jackson Power and they communicated that this new language would severely impact their projects, with representatives from CPV saying that if this language were enacted, it would most likely cause them to halt construction of their project.

The Illinois Senate convened on Tuesday, June 15, intending to pass an energy bill. Our team went to work prior to Tuesday, contacting Senators and expressing our concerns over the Governor's new language and asked that they not vote for any energy bill with this new language. A small group from the IBEW and I met with Senate President Harmon, Senator Hastings, and their staff on Wednesday, where we expressed our concerns with the proposed decarbonization language and asked that there be a pause on moving forward with any energy bill until we could resolve our issues. With the help of our many friends in the Senate, we were able to stop any bill from coming out of the Senate on Tuesday that contained this new language.

After putting a stop to this bill on Tuesday, representatives from the environmental community reached out to us that evening and we met with them on Wednesday. Our meetings were productive, and we made great progress coming to an agreement on language that will not negatively affect the two gas plants under construction in our local. The Governor's office has now committed that they do not want to discourage the construction of these two new plants or two other proposed plants in Illinois, which are in the permitting stage.

I will continue working with our partners from labor, negotiating, and drafting language for an energy bill that will address the concerns with our two gas plants, and remain optimistic that we will come to a resolution on this matter in short order. I expect the Senate and House to reconvene sometime in the next few weeks to take up an energy bill that is agreed to by labor and the environmental community. I will continue to keep everyone updated and to work this bill to the end to ensure the issues of the IBEW and our local are addressed and protected in any legislation moving forward.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Clemmons", with a long, sweeping underline.

Mike Clemmons
Business Manager