

# Energy Community Reinvestment Report 2025

The Energy Community Reinvestment Act (“Act”) was signed into law as an article within the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA, P.A. 102-0662) by Governor JB Pritzker on September 15, 2021. This Act entailed the enactment of a range of programs to support the Illinois workforce and communities during the transition to renewable energy in Illinois. Section 10-40 of this Act required that the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) prepare a report “365 days after the effective date...and at least once each calendar year thereafter” to provide an update on the impact of those programs and recommendations for future modifications. This is the second such report.

## Energy Community Reinvestment Act Implementation

News and information on programs established in this Act are available online [here](#). This website is where DCEO provides updates and documentation related to all DCEO CEJA programs.

There continues to be a strong focus on community and stakeholder engagement throughout the CEJA program development process to ensure program results help the target populations. DCEO has partnered with several public universities to assist with program design, launch, and administration.

## Energy Transition Workforce Commission

On December 8, 2022, the Energy Transition Workforce Commission voted to approve the [Energy Transition Workforce Commission Phase I Report](#), summarizing preliminary findings. The commission voted to approve the [Energy Transition Workforce Phase II Report](#) on January 5, 2024. The Commission’s final task to provide recommendations can be found here: [ETWC Recommendations](#). Reports and activities can be found online here [Energy Transition Workforce Commission - Public Notices](#)

DCEO seeks to engage Climate Jobs Institute to conduct a comprehensive reevaluation of the report, and work with Department to publish a modified version in 2027. The Climate Jobs Institute is currently conducting a larger research project exploring communities and regions impacted by coal mine and plant closures. The economic and employment analysis they perform, as well as community outreach, will inform the report.

## Energy Transition Community Grants

Energy Transition Community Grants (ETCG) support economic development in communities that have recently experienced or will soon experience a fossil fuel plant, nuclear plant, or coal mine closure. As of 2025, ETCG is in its third round of funding with

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109 pending awards. At the time of this reporting, grantees are submitting their Phase 2 Applications for Round 3 in which grantees will document project details. Approved awards for Round 1 and Round 2 are available [here](#).

Round / Calendar Year	Awards	Funds Awarded
1 / 2023	53	\$25,863,207
2 / 2024	58	\$26,472,881.66
3 / 2025	109	\$26,145,108.98

Energy Transition Community Grant has funded several projects over the years that includes workforce development, business development, capital projects, planning projects and renewable energy projects. A list of these awards can be found at [DCEO CEJA Grants Awarded.xlsx | Powered by Box](#)

An example of an Energy Transition Community Grant (ETCG) project is the City of Steeleville, a rural community of approximately 2,500 residents located 70 miles outside of St. Louis. Using ETCG funds leveraged with federal resources, the city implemented eight renewable energy projects that now account for approximately 75 percent of municipal energy use. Once fully operational, the projects are expected to generate more than 421,000 kW of clean energy annually and deliver an estimated \$1.5 million in cost savings over 25 years. This investment demonstrates how coordinated state and federal funding can offset the economic and environmental impacts of fossil fuel plant and mine closures while advancing long-term community resilience and sustainability

## Energy Transition Community Grants – Zion

The Energy Transition Community Grant Program provides funding to support economic development for taxing bodies in Zion, Illinois, following the closure of the Zion Nuclear Power Station. Two previous funding rounds have already been awarded for economic development activities.

In 2025, the General Assembly amended legislation to mandate 75% of the grant amount be distributed to the taxing bodies to replace property tax that would have previously been collected ([20 ILCS 735/10-20\(j\)](#), effective 2/20/25)

The remaining 25% of grant funds may be requested as reimbursement for economic development activities designed to mitigate the impact of job and revenue loss. The ETCG Zion Round 3 Notice of Funding Opportunity will be released in December 2025.

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## Displaced Energy Workers Bill of Rights

Under the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA), the Displaced Energy Worker Bill of Rights ensures workers impacted by plant or mine closures receive timely and coordinated support. The Act requires employers to provide advance notification and imposes reporting obligations to enable state agencies to respond quickly and effectively.

Illinois issues an annual mailing to employers that includes reminders about state and federal notification requirements, along with information on CEJA's Displaced Energy Worker Bill of Rights obligations for advance reporting and coordination during energy-related closures.

The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), in collaboration with the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) and local workforce partners, provides comprehensive transition services to affected workers. DCEO's Rapid Response Unit leads this effort, offering career counseling, job search assistance, navigation of employment benefits, and access to training, retraining, and upskilling opportunities. Workers can also receive referrals to Illinois Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) for assistance with entrepreneurship and small business support.

During Calendar Year 2025, DCEO did not receive employer notices from plant owners under the CEJA Displaced Energy Worker Bill of Rights reporting requirements. However, Viper Mine experienced layoffs in 2024–2025 as part of its planned closure, and no notice was submitted. Rapid Response staff made multiple outreach attempts to offer displaced energy worker services. During contact on March 27, 2025, it was reported that most affected workers had already secured new employment and that 13 remaining employees planned to stay through closure. Because the required notifications were not received and engagement was limited, services were not provided.

The Climate Jobs Institute is conducting a case study of the Viper Mine closure to explore the impact of the closure and to identify recommendations for improving the implementation of the Displaced Energy Worker Bill of Rights.

## Displaced Energy Worker Dependent Transition Scholarship

The Displaced Energy Worker Dependent Transition Scholarship Program provides scholarship assistance to children of eligible displaced energy workers. The program was designed to support students who attend or will attend an undergraduate or graduate

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program at an Illinois institution and have been impacted by a parent's layoff from a retiring power plant or a closing coal mine. The Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) has promulgated rules for the program authorized by Section 10-30 of the Act, and these can be found in the Illinois Administrative Code Title 23, Part 2746 (effective July 1, 2022).

In 2024, there was one eligible applicant for the program. ISAC is working to increase the awareness of the Scholarship, but responses remain low for this calendar year. There may be additional applicants eligible for a Spring Term (Q3, Q4). Based upon the volume of applications at this time, ISAC does not anticipate awarding the entire \$1.1M appropriation for this fiscal year.

ISAC posts the annual program application on its Student Portal. Additional information about the program, including eligibility criteria and award details can be found [here](#). Prospective applicants can contact ISAC's Call Center Student Engagement and Support Services for more information at 800.899.ISAC, or email [isac.studentservices@illinois.gov](mailto:isac.studentservices@illinois.gov). Spanish-speaking counselors are available.