



Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

JB Pritzker, Governor

Hydrogen Economy Task Force

November 18, 2025

8:30 am to 10:00 am

Minutes

Location: Virtual WebEx Video Conference

Meeting link: <https://illinois.webex.com/illinois/j.php?MTID=mf1f37cf22cc6e45d8cfc009980d78100>

Meeting number: 2634 100 7129

Password: NBphCm85CP3

Join by video system:

Dial [26341007129@illinois.webex.com](tel:26341007129@illinois.webex.com)

You can also dial 173.243.2.68 and enter your meeting number.

Join by phone:

+312-535-8110 United States Toll (Chicago)

+1-415-655-0002 US Toll

Access code: 2634 100 7129

Minutes:

I. Call to Order at 8:33 am.

II. Roll Call of Membership

Patrick Devaney: No

Sen. Laura Ellman: Yes

Kyle Freeman: Yes

Jim Hoyt: No

Dan LeFevers: No

Dan McManus: Yes

Dulce Ortiz: No

Chad Parker: Yes

Laura Roche: Yes

Dr. Petros Sofronis: Yes

Dr. Michael Wang: Yes

Sarah Duffy: Yes

Patrick Evans: No

Rep. Bradley Fritts: No

Elizabeth Irvin: Yes

George Letavish: No

Carly McCrory-McKay: No

Carrie Schoenberger: Yes

Sen. Sue Rezin: No

Doug Scott: Yes

Catherine Stashak: Yes

Dana Wynn: Yes

Terra Costa-Howard and Jon Horek were removed from the roll as they are no longer on the task force.

III. Approval of September 16, 2025, Minutes

Dr. Petros Sofronis motioned to accept the minutes from September 16, 2025. Laura Roche second. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

IV. Chair Report

Chair Ellman reported in recent months she attended a couple of panels, webinars, and seminars about hydrogen. The common theme is with the funding for hydrogen hubs being curtailed in particular areas it will really be going to be up to the states to foster or encourage or incentivize or lay out groundwork or framework for hydrogen. That is one of the themes I would like to explore with the task force this coming year on how can Illinois foster and incentivize or create that framework for hydrogen economy? And how does it make sense? She would like to have this at the next meeting or future meetings. To have a nice discussion about what people think about Illinois' role in hydrogen economy.

Aaron asked, "can you share what happened at this veto session with the hydrogen task force?"

Chair Ellman: The sunsets got expanded until 2028 to be able to live, breathe, and foster hydrogen.

V. Old Business

- CY25 Annual Report (DRAFT)

Chair Ellman reported the Hydrogen Economy Task Force Annual Report is due in 12 days. Potential content for the report has been drafted. Report will be slim because of what happened with federal funding. Points for report are:

- HETF meetings recap from 2025
- Point out stop work order on the MachH2
- Request to HETF members on their activities
- Review the presentation to German delegation that showcased hydrogen in the state
- Symposium idea
- Summary/Cover letter/paragraph
- Recommendations moving forward to 2028
- Workforce
- Sustainable Aviation Fuel
- Illinois position in the US and world
- Data, use cases, academic activities
- Can we get any information from Dr. Wang about Argonne
- Past years legislative activities on how it impacts this task force (SB25)

Dr. Michael Wang:

- Argonne is supportive of the symposium and will be happy to introduce some organizations like the National Hydrogen Association.
- Argonne can support from a technical point of view
- Will facilitate the input within Argonne working with the hydrogen area to contribute to this session of the report

Doug Scott:

- Talk about what the Feds did with other places in their energy bill. Helps point out what happened to tax credits and other things as well.
- The legislative session for Illinois, the SB25 section in addition to the storage, is great to highlight the ties to hydrogen
- The procurement ability that is in there and the whole resource adequacy piece that agencies have to do. Plus, the idea of having some kind of clean procurement that could supplement what generation we have in the State or maybe tie for hydrogen in that as well.

Chair Ellman asked Doug Scott, “Can we get some information on some of these items from you or staff?”

Catherine Stashak:

- Under workforce to keep first responds in mind. They need to be trained and have training and have education as well.
- The National Fire Protection Association is in process of creating a new standard and FPA 800 specifically for storage use and just handling all batteries. They already have 855 that is for energy storage systems or battery energy. BESS is now what they are calling them (Battery Energy Storage Systems) but it was just determined by the Standards Council that we just need a standard for the storage handling and use of batteries and hydrogen batteries. They are in the early phases of creating the technical committee. So, if we feel there is something important that should be related to hydrogen batteries in this standard, we can submit a proposal (either myself or as the HETF). It would be a good place for us to get into what is going to be a nationally and much needed standard.
- They are thinking about making it a provisional standard which means instead of going through two sets of public comments it would only go through a first revision and initial draft would be for public comment and then they would come down with the final draft so it would be available quicker. The last time they moved this quickly was when they developed NFPA 3000 for active shooters.

Dr. Petros Sofronis:

- Regarding the summit has already reached out to Dean of the Grainger College of Engineering as well as the Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation about the curtailment of the hydrogen task force initiative. It is time for our state to take leadership to see what we can achieve and what we can accomplish in our state. They are fully committed to helping organize the summit in Chicago given that the hydrogen task force provides directions, the University of Illinois will take care of the technical organization and whatever else is needed. The DCEOs help is needed with the overall presentation of the symposium.
- Spoke with the former chair of the Hydrogen Fuel Cells Technology Office of the Department of Energy, Dr. Sunita Satyappal. She said she will come to Chicago and present on how the state can coordinate efforts for hydrogen economy locally in the state.

- The key scientists in ARCHES, the California Hydrogen Hub, Dr. Jack Brower from University of California Irvine, made suggestions about the sessions that we can organize in the symposium to have industry drawn under the state's general directions.
- How can hydrogen be used for biofuels?
- Almost ready to move forward with summit in Chicago given there is time to organize. It is suggested to take place in April which gives plenty of time to work with organizations, sister states, industry, universities, etc., and to contact and possibly bring them in.
- An opportunity for the state that this task force can present is on how hydrogen can increase the use of nuclear energy? At UIUC there is a project called Illinois Microreactor Demonstration Project with small modular reactors. Which has already achieved two regulatory milestones with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission with a construction permit for 2026 and operation plan in 2029. The subject includes the mass transit districts of Champaign-Urbana to provide hydrogen that will be produced from microreactor. This can show how compatible this project is to hydrogen.
- Spoke with the director of Champaign-Urbana's transit district director Karl Knutt, who is leading a national hydrogen fuel cell bus council. He said Springfield is considering moving to use hydrogen buses as well. The obstacle is cost of hydrogen. This might be the main topic at our summit in Chicago of how we can reduce the cost of hydrogen by coordinating between industry and the state incentives.
- As an agricultural state with 11 ethanol plant facilities with opportunities with a lot of CO2. But if we provide hydrogen and CO2, we can call it e-methanol and can be used for maritime as a future fuel like SAF another future fuel.

Chair Ellman said she would like to get vote on the annual report items today to have it published on time. To use the list of items for content (adding the notes from above from Dr. Wang and Doug Scott) for draft ready on Dec. 1st. The draft would be sent out to members in advance to move the report forward to meet the deadline.

Carrie Schoeneberger asked if December 1st, the hard deadline or is there possibility of publishing a little bit later in early December to allow some time to review and edit? Chair Ellman said content to be added by members should be sent by the end of the day on November 20th to be included in the report. The report will be slim but will have items from list to be published by deadline.

Aaron McEvoy said Monday November 24th, we put it together but still must go to the director's office by the 26th for review then be submitted.

Motion by Doug Scott to approve the process laid out with the dates for us to get content back to be filed on December 1st. Second by Dr. Petros Sofronis. Passed by voice vote, unanimous.

VI. Task Force Administrative Business

- Proposed CY26 Meeting Dates

Aaron McEvoy mentioned there needs to be meeting dates discussed for 2026. The current schedule is every two months, the second Tuesday at 8:30 am. Proposed dates for 2026

calendar year are: January 13th, March 10th, May 12th, July 14th, September 8th, October 6th, and November 10th.

Motion to accept the dates was made by Doug Scott. Second by Sarah Duffy. Voice vote was unanimous.

The calendar invites for the meetings will be sent by the end of the year for members.

VII. Task Force Members information share

Chair Ellman said if there are any task force members that want to play an active role in planning the summit in Chicago to email Aaron.

Sarah Duffy said she will help but wonders what the budget for this is.

Dr. Petros Sofronis said the state must take the lead and DCEO must play a major part in the organization process.

Aaron McEvoy said this will be discussed and will need to make sure to stay within our guidelines when it comes to procurement and sponsorship.

Dana Wynn said she plans to visit the sustainable aviation fuel research at the National Corn Ethanol Research Center next week and will try to add some of this to the report on that workforce topic. NCERC there are lots of opportunities in research and pilot projects to work with them and are willing to work with community colleges. Plans on asking questions when it comes to working groups and professional development opportunities and partnerships.

Catherine Stashak asked, “can hydrogen be used as a refrigerant?” only ask because of the push right now by the US EPA towards lower global warming potential refrigerants, but do not know enough about hydrogen. I only ask because the trend to go down to global warming, lower warming, potential refrigerants and I was involved in the A2Ls, the testing for that and now they are pushing to the A3s which is the highest flammable, where propane A3 is common and the most flammable. So, we are working on codes for that.

Carrie Schoeneberger said she has not seen it done with hydrogen but has with ammonia, which is made with hydrogen. Ammonia is proposed as a lower warming type refrigerant. Dr. Petros Sofronis said ammonia is one chemical compound that is considered for refrigerants. But Co2 is another one to be used as refrigerant. But he has not heard of it regarding hydrogen.

Chad Parker said the properties of hydrogen would make it possible however there are other gases liquids that would be better refrigerants and not as explosive as hydrogen. Most likely nobody would use it as a refrigerant due to its explosive nature. Hydrogen is finding lots of uses in industry, especially in the chemical field, however I have not heard anyone trying it for refrigeration.

VIII. Audience Comment Period

There were no audience comments at this time.

IX. Adjournment

The adjournment of the meeting was motioned by Doug Scott and second by Sarah Duffy at 9:26 am. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Upcoming meetings:

- See upcoming meetings in separate attachment