



# The Illinois Commerce Commission

FACT SHEET

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## What is the ICC?

The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) is a state agency that regulates investor-owned electric, natural gas, and water utilities. The ICC determines rates and regulatory policy in the state. The five ICC commissioners are appointed by the governor and approved by the state Senate for five-year terms. The governor also appoints one commissioner to be ICC chairman. Under Illinois law, no more than three Commissioners may belong to the same political party.

## What does the ICC do?

The ICC conducts hearings on utility rates and service, audits utility operations and investigates consumer complaints against public utilities.

In cases before the ICC, an “administrative law judge” will spend months listening to expert testimony and legal arguments—filed by parties in the case, such as CUB, other consumer advocates, the utilities, and the ICC’s own staff. The judge will then make a recommendation concerning utility rates or service to the five commissioners, who will consider the recommendation and make a final ruling.

CUB can initiate proceedings by filing a complaint against a utility; or it can “intervene” in a proceeding to argue for lower rates and pro-consumer policies. Utility companies also may intervene in cases, or they can initiate one by, for example, formally proposing a rate increase.

## How is the ICC funded?

A tax on utility bills helps fund the ICC. Commissioners’ salaries range from about \$100,000 to \$119,900 a year. The chairman makes about \$137,000 a year.

## How do I contact the ICC?

You can file a complaint against a utility company by calling the ICC at **1-800-524-0795**, or visiting [ICC.Illinois.gov](http://ICC.Illinois.gov). If you have a question about how best to proceed with a complaint, before calling the ICC you can, call CUB, at **1-800-669-5556**.

## Who are the ICC Commissioners?

**Chairman Carrie Zalewski:** Gov. J.B. Pritzker appointed Chairman Zalewski to a five-year term in 2019. She came to the ICC from the Illinois Pollution Control Board, where she had served since 2009. Prior to that position, Chairman Zalewski was Assistant Chief Counsel for the Illinois Department of Transportation and before that a private practice attorney.

**Commissioner Sadzi Martha Oliva:** Gov. Bruce Rauner appointed Commissioner Oliva in 2017. Prior to joining the ICC, she was General Counsel for the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation. She also previously worked at the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and Illinois Attorney General’s Office.

**Commissioner D. Ethan Kimbrel:** Commissioner Kimbrel was appointed to a five-year term by Gov. Bruce Rauner in 2018. Before his appointment, Commissioner Kimbrel served as an ICC administrative law judge and later as the ICC’s Chief Administrative Law Judge. Before joining the ICC, Kimbrel practiced law.

**Commissioner Maria S. Bocanegra:** Commissioner Bocanegra was appointed to a four-year term by Gov. J.B. Pritzker in 2019. Prior to joining the ICC, she served as Arbitrator at the Illinois Workers’ Compensation Commission. Previously, she held the Public Seat on the Labor Advisory Board for the Illinois Department of Labor.

**Commissioner Michael T. Carrigan:** Commissioner Carrigan was appointed to a five-year term by Gov. J.B. Pritzker in 2020. Before joining the ICC, he served as an officer with the Illinois American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) for more than 19 years. During that time he served as secretary-treasurer and president.