



CITIZENS UTILITY BOARD

Fighting for Illinois Consumers

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CUB Statement on passage of budget bill

The budget bill that passed the U.S. Senate represents higher power bills for consumers across the country. Tax credits that help everyday people use solar power or energy efficiency to cut costs at home have proven to be wildly popular and highly successful—these incentives are cost-effective ways to cut utility bills, reduce energy prices for everyone, help make the grid more reliable, create jobs and spark the economy. -Jim Chilsen, CUB Director of Communications

Background:

- The final vote on the bill was 50-50, with the Vice President breaking the tie.
- The bill now heads back to the House of Representatives for consideration.
- As it stands now, the bill ends these tax credits by Dec. 31, 2025:
 - The “residential clean energy credit” helps consumers recoup up to 30 percent of the costs of energy-saving projects, like installing rooftop solar panels.
 - The “energy efficient home improvement credit” helps people recoup up to 30 percent of the cost (up to \$1,200/a year) for energy-saving projects, like a professional home energy audit; installing insulation; door, window and electric panel upgrades; and installing a high-efficiency air-conditioning unit. (There’s an additional credit of up to \$2,000 available for buying an electric heat pump or heat pump water heater.)
- According to several studies this year, rolling back clean energy tax credits could increase the average family’s energy bill by as much as \$400 per year within a decade. In Illinois, the League of Conservation Voters has estimated that the legislation could lead to a \$168 a year increase in residential energy bills, and a 21 percent increase in commercial and industrial energy bills.
- One piece of good news: A provision that proposed a new excise tax for large-scale wind and solar installations was taken out of the bill. We do not yet have updates on two other programs that have been threatened in Washington: Energy Star and federal “LIHEAP” energy-assistance funding.
- Illinois has strong energy policy in place, and this development just ramps up the urgency to continue to pass good legislation here in the state. CUB will never give up fighting for pro-consumer energy policy on the local, state and federal levels.

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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.

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