

Legislative and Regulatory Update—April 11, 2010

There are no new bills to note since the last Legislative Update dated March 14, 2010, but there has been some amendments to prior bills that we have highlighted that are of interest.

First, on the House side, HB 5429-HOMEOWNERS SOLAR RIGHTS ACT-creates the Homeowners' Solar Rights Act, and would require homeowners' association and condominium unit owners' association to adopt an energy policy statement concerning the location, design, and architectural requirements of solar energy systems or other energy devices. The critical change in the amendment would be striking “other energy devices” language making the bill applicable to only “solar energy systems.”

On the Senate side, SB 2810-LOC GOV/SCHOOL-ENERGY CONSERV-was amended by replacing the wording as introduced in its entirety and replaced with a proposal to amend the Local Government Energy Conservation Act, the School Code, and the Public University Energy Conservation Act. In provisions concerning guaranteed energy savings contracts, energy savings may now include energy reduction and offsetting sources of renewable energy funds including renewable energy credits and carbon credits. This bill is currently assigned to the Executive Committee

Also on the Senate side, SB 3147-EFFICIENT GREEN IL TAX CREDIT-would create the Efficient and Green Illinois Tax Credit Act for up to 25% of the cost of qualifying expenditures for energy efficient projects. As introduced the definition of “energy efficient projects” included solar energy equipment, Energy Star certified heat pumps, lighting retrofit projects, and wind equipment. The amendment would add to this definition projects related to green roofs and other environmentally sustainable landscaping.

March Spotlight: SLGC Advocacy training in Springfield.

As the temperatures rise as we approach summer, so to are things heating up with the State and Local Government Committee, particularly with their advocacy. This will begin with the upcoming Advocacy training in Springfield on April 19 through the 20th for some USGBC Chapter members from across Illinois. Only 5-6 of these Advocacy training sessions are slated throughout USGBC’s Chapter network this year, so this is a valuable opportunity for our Chapter.

The training will comprise of an Advocacy Training Workshop for developing an understanding of the role of not-for-profits in advocacy, the way legislatures work, the way lawmakers think, ways to make USGBC’s message be recognized and heard, and ways to attract and keep a good team. There will also be Compact Media Training focused on managing the USGBC message. The training will end Tuesday at the State Capital with short meeting with Senators and Representatives.

It is an exciting time to be part of the State and Local Government Committee. Incredible opportunities exist for your involvement with the Chapter and also for you both professionally and personally.

More information on the legislation can be found at ilga.gov. Information on the Illinois EPA / Pollution Control Board rules is at www.ipcb.state.il.us or contact Sean Ziadeh at seanziadeh@hotmail.com or by calling (248) 320-3208 for any other information.