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## **Illinois Utilities' Supplier Diversity Spend Adds Billions to Illinois GDP**

*New report shows \$11.8 billion impact over four years*

CHICAGO – (April 20, 2021) – A new economic impact study conducted by the Illinois Utilities Business Diversity Council ([IUBDC](#)) – including Ameren Illinois, Aqua, ComEd, Illinois American Water, Nicor Gas, People's Gas, and North Shore Gas – shows Illinois utilities' diverse supplier spend contributed \$11.8 billion to the Illinois GDP from 2017-2020, with \$4 billion in purchases from Illinois-based diverse businesses. From 2017 to 2020, the seven electric, gas and water utilities combined spent an average year-over-year increase of \$576 million – more than a 28% increase each year on average.

Additionally, the IUBDC companies supported an average of nearly 20,000 jobs every year from 2017-2020, providing a total of \$1.1 billion in employee wages.

"Businesses owned by people of color, women and veterans are playing a major role in the efforts of all Illinois utilities to modernize energy infrastructure, meet the evolving needs of customers, and support the transition to clean energy in Illinois," said [Joe Dominguez](#), CEO of ComEd and 2021 Chairman of the IUBDC Board of Directors. "The IUBDC is evolving in its efforts to help diverse suppliers navigate the procurement process of Illinois utilities, providing mentorship and forging partnerships that lead to opportunities, which is more important than ever. These in-state businesses have the necessary capabilities, they just need an opportunity to demonstrate it."

In 2020, while companies in many sectors were forced to reduce staff due to the COVID-19 pandemic, IUBDC members spent nearly \$2 billion with Illinois diverse suppliers, including \$1 billion with minority-owned businesses – an increase of 104% from 2017; \$831 million with women-owned businesses – a 58% increase from 2017; and \$110 million with veteran-owned businesses – up 168% from 2017. Illinois Commerce Commissioner Maria Bocanegra said the IUBDC is making good on its promise when it was formed in 2015.

"The IUBDC has become a strong voice for diverse suppliers in Illinois and its members are national leaders in supplier and workforce diversity spend and initiatives," said Bocanegra. "We commend this effort to dig even deeper and assess the economic impact of increased spending with diverse suppliers, and we remain proud of the work, progress, and efforts the Council has undertaken since its inception."

ComEd, along with Ameren Illinois, Aqua, Illinois American Water, Nicor Gas, Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas, formed the IUBDC to advance the effectiveness of business diversity initiatives among their

respective utility companies, and to encourage diverse businesses to forge effective working relationships with utilities. The goal of the IUBDC is to help develop a strong economy and create a productive environment for growth and access to diverse businesses. Since 2014, all electric, gas and water companies under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Commerce Commission with at least 100,000 customers report annually in April on their procurement goals and actual spending with diverse suppliers. The most recent numbers demonstrate IUBDC's effectiveness, according to [Charles Matthews](#), president and CEO, Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas and former IUBDC chairman.

"The goal of this coalition was to come together and collaborate on additional ways to make a positive impact," said Matthews. "The IUBDC is proud to have a large impact when it comes to partnering with minority-owned, women-owned, and veteran-owned businesses and we will continue to look for new and innovative ways to continue to grow this impact."

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For more information about the IUBDC and to view the full report, visit [www.iubdc.com](http://www.iubdc.com)

#### **About the Illinois Utilities Business Diversity Council**

*The Illinois Utilities Business Diversity Council (IUBDC) members include Ameren Illinois, ComEd, Illinois American Water, Nicor Gas, North Shore Gas and Peoples Gas. The mission of the IUBDC is to provide Illinois utilities a forum for best practice sharing and information exchange with a focus on advancing the growth and utilization of utility-based diverse businesses in the state of Illinois.*