

March 18, 2025

Representative Lawrence Walsh, Chair
Illinois House Public Utilities Committee
Stratton Building
401 S Spring St.
Springfield, IL 62704
Room 413

Re: MEEA's Comments on The Importance of Access to Whole-Building Aggregated Data

Dear Chairperson Walsh and Members of the House Public Utilities Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on the importance of providing access to aggregated whole-building data in Illinois. The Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (MEEA) is a member-based non-profit organization promoting energy efficiency to optimize energy generation, reduce consumption, create jobs, and decrease carbon emissions in all Midwest communities. MEEA is a nonpartisan organization made up of 170+ diverse members including 96 member organizations based or working in Illinois. We have worked in Illinois and other states to provide technical assistance and education on energy efficient building policies since 2009.

MEEA commends legislators for seeking to improve energy usage data access, which helps building owners improve their energy efficiency. MEEA supports the adoption and implementation of policies that measure energy use of existing buildings and improve building performance. Providing qualified recipients in Illinois with access to their building's energy use data can provide important insights that will empower them to make decisions leading to energy savings, lower utility bills, and wider utility program impact. Improving the ease of data access while protecting tenant privacy will create the potential for the following benefits:

- Illinois municipalities will have the opportunity to implement or continue programs which contribute to their energy or climate goals. When utility data is easily accessible, compliance with a benchmarking ordinance or building performance standard is more successful¹.
- Qualified building owners will be empowered to make informed decisions about their building investments. Efficiency upgrades can lead to lower utility bills, improved occupant health and increased property values; feasible and cost-effective upgrades can be identified with access to the building's energy use data.
 - You can't manage what you don't measure: Buildings with benchmarked data of their energy use see an average energy savings of 2.4% year after year².
- Illinois utilities will see an uptake in their program offerings based on the increased awareness of energy use and desire for improvements. Building owners and operators will be looking for ways to increase the efficiency of their buildings to reduce their operating costs and increase property values.

¹ [EPA Guidance for Utilities on Providing Whole-Building Energy Data to Enable Benchmarking](#)

² [Building Energy Benchmarking and Transparency: Overview for State and Local Decision Makers](#)

- Accurately understanding building energy consumption is crucial given the challenges facing our electric grid. For several years, our nation has seen relatively flat demand for energy despite increases in population and economic output. Energy efficiency has largely succeeded thus far in tempering this demand by reducing unnecessary generation.
 - However, recent trends show that many utilities expect demand to skyrocket in the coming years, largely due to the rapid growth of data centers and other energy-intensive buildings³. It is critical that building owners be able to accurately measure their energy usage in order to improve overall building efficiency to alleviate stress on the grid.

If you have any questions about these comments, noted reports and references, or general impact and analysis of building energy policies, please contact Emma Hurbanis, Building Codes & Policy Associate for MEEA, at ehurbanis@mwalliance.org. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Paige Knutsen

Executive Director

³ [Strategic Industries Surging: Driving US Power Demand](#)