AN ACT concerning utilities.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois, represented in the General Assembly:

Section 5. The Illinois Power Agency Act is amended by adding Section 1-92 as follows:

(20 ILCS 3855/1-92 new)

Sec. 1-92. Aggregation of electrical load by municipalities and counties.

(a) The corporate authorities of a municipality or county board of a county may adopt an ordinance under which it may aggregate in accordance with this Section residential and small commercial retail electrical loads located, respectively, within the municipality or the unincorporated areas of the county and, for that purpose, may solicit bids and enter into service agreements to facilitate for those loads the sale and purchase of electricity and related services and equipment.

The corporate authorities or county board may also exercise such authority jointly with any other municipality or county. Two or more municipalities or counties, or a combination of both, may initiate a process jointly to authorize aggregation by a majority vote of each particular municipality or county as required by this Section.

If the corporate authorities or the county board seek to

operate the aggregation program as an opt-out program for residential and small commercial retail customers, then prior to the adoption of an ordinance with respect to aggregation of residential and small commercial retail electric loads, the corporate authorities of a municipality or the county board of a county shall submit a referendum to its residents to determine whether or not the aggregation program shall operate as an opt-out program for residential and small commercial retail customers.

In addition to the notice and conduct requirements of the general election law, notice of the referendum shall state briefly the purpose of the referendum. The question of whether the corporate authorities or the county board shall adopt an opt-out aggregation program for residential and small commercial retail customers shall be submitted to the electors of the municipality or county board at a regular election and approved by a majority of the electors voting on the question. The corporate authorities or county board must certify to the proper election authority, which must submit the question at an election in accordance with the Election Code.

The election authority must submit the question in substantially the following form:

Shall the (municipality or county in which the question is being voted upon) have the authority to arrange for the supply of electricity for its residential and small commercial retail customers who have not opted out of such

program?

The election authority must record the votes as "Yes" or "No".

If a majority of the electors voting on the question vote in the affirmative, then the corporate authorities or county board may implement an opt-out aggregation program for residential and small commercial retail customers.

A referendum must pass in each particular municipality or county that is engaged in the aggregation program. If the referendum fails, then the corporate authorities or county board shall operate the aggregation program as an opt-in program for residential and small commercial retail customers.

An ordinance under this Section shall specify whether the aggregation will occur only with the prior consent of each person owning, occupying, controlling, or using an electric load center proposed to be aggregated. Nothing in this Section, however, authorizes the aggregation of electric loads that are served or authorized to be served by an electric cooperative as defined by and pursuant to the Electric Supplier Act or loads served by a municipality that owns and operates its own electric distribution system. No aggregation shall take effect unless approved by a majority of the members of the corporate authority or county board voting upon the ordinance.

A governmental aggregator under this Section is not a public utility or an alternative retail electric supplier.

(b) Upon the applicable requisite authority under this Section, the corporate authorities or the county board, with

assistance from the Illinois Power Agency, shall develop a plan of operation and governance for the aggregation program so authorized. Before adopting a plan under this Section, the corporate authorities or county board shall hold at least 2 public hearings on the plan. Before the first hearing, the corporate authorities or county board shall publish notice of the hearings once a week for 2 consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in the jurisdiction. The notice shall summarize the plan and state the date, time, and location of each hearing. Any load aggregation plan established pursuant to this Section shall:

(1) provide for universal access to all applicable residential customers and equitable treatment of applicable residential customers;

(2) describe demand management and energy efficiency services to be provided to each class of customers; and

(3) meet any requirements established by law concerning aggregated service offered pursuant to this Section.

(c) The process for soliciting bids for electricity and other related services and awarding proposed agreements for the purchase of electricity and other related services shall be conducted in the following order:

(1) The corporate authorities or county board may solicit bids for electricity and other related services.

(2) Notwithstanding Section 16-122 of the Public

Utilities Act and Section 2HH of the Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices Act, an electric utility that provides residential and small commercial retail electric service in the aggregate area must, upon request of the corporate authorities or the county board in the aggregate area, submit to the requesting party, in an electronic format, those names and addresses of residential and small commercial retail customers in the aggregate area that are reflected in the electric utility's records at the time of the request. Any corporate authority or county board receiving customer information from an electric utility shall be subject to the limitations on the disclosure of the information described in Section 16-122 of the Public Utilities Act and Section 2HH of the Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices Act, and an electric utility shall not be held liable for any claims arising out of the provision of information pursuant to this item (2).

(d) If the corporate authorities or county board operate under an opt-in program for residential and small commercial retail customers, then the corporate authorities or county board shall comply with all of the following:

(1) Within 60 days after receiving the bids, the corporate authorities or county board shall allow residential and small commercial retail customers to commit to the terms and conditions of a bid that has been selected by the corporate authorities or county board.

(2) If (A) the corporate authorities or county board award proposed agreements for the purchase of electricity and other related services and (B) an agreement is reached between the corporate authorities or county board for those services, then customers committed to the terms and conditions according to item (1) of this subsection (d) shall be committed to the agreement.

(e) If the corporate authorities or county board operate as an opt-out program for residential and small commercial retail customers, then it shall be the duty of the aggregated entity to fully inform residential and small commercial retail customers in advance that they have the right to opt out of the aggregation program. The disclosure shall prominently state all charges to be made and shall include full disclosure of the cost to obtain service pursuant to Section 16-103 of the Public Utilities Act, how to access it, and the fact that it is available to them without penalty, if they are currently receiving service under that Section. The Illinois Power Agency shall furnish, without charge, to any citizen a list of all supply options available to them in a format that allows comparison of prices and products.

The Illinois Power Agency shall provide assistance to municipalities, counties, or associations working with municipalities to help complete the plan and bidding process.

This Section does not prohibit municipalities or counties from entering into an intergovernmental agreement to aggregate

residential and small commercial retail electric loads.

(220 ILCS 5/17-800 rep.)

Section 10. The Public Utilities Act is amended by repealing Section 17-800.