

Dear Environment Committee and Energy Subcommittee,

Please join us at our next virtual Environment Committee meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 17, where we will discuss environmental justice.

Meeting Details

Topic: Environmental justice

Date: Tuesday, Oct. 17

Time: 10-11:30 a.m.

Register: Please register in advance for the Zoom meeting with the link that was sent to Committee members.

New programs and investments seek to improve the quality of life in communities that have previously experienced disproportionate harmful environmental impacts. The U.S. EPA, Illinois EPA and others have defined these environmental justice (EJ) communities using varying criteria such as pollution exposure, health outcomes, poverty, race, and access to resources like clean energy, transportation, and open space. These environmental justice communities (EJC) are also called disadvantaged communities (DAC) and are measured and mapped by affected census tracts.

In the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus membership, between 113 and 151 communities have designated EJ census tracts, depending on the EJ screening tool used. Yet the perception is that EJ is just a big city issue. EJ leadership too often excludes representatives from suburban EJCs and beyond.

As President Biden's [Justice 40 Initiative](#) and the state's Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) aim to prioritize investment in these environmental justice communities, it is critical to organize and raise awareness of the many opportunities for engagement and funding among all EJC throughout the region. Please join us for this timely and inclusive discussion on environmental justice.

We will compare EJ screening tools (including [EPA EJScreen](#), [Illinois EPA EJ Start](#), CEJA's [Illinois Solar for All program map](#), and the Illinois Power Agency's [Equity Investment Eligible Community map](#)), review CEJA and Justice 40, and we will discuss a proposed collaboration between the Caucus, South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA), Faith in Place, Go Green Illinois, One Earth Collective and University of Illinois School of Law to engage and support EJ communities across the region.

[GRC objective: SC22](#) - *Support social justice and equity throughout the community.*

[Climate Action Plan](#): *Equity considerations are included for all of the Climate Action Plan objectives.*