The Trump Administration is turning our nation backwards on climate change solutions by withdrawing from the Paris Climate Accord and attempting to repeal the Clean Power Plan and other important Clean Air Act standards that protect healthy clean air for all. While ELPC aggressively defends against this federal backsliding, ELPC is just as vigorously stepping up our offense in the Midwest states to advance policies and open paths for innovative new wind, solar and energy efficiency technologies that drive electricity markets. Solar Energy + Storage is a game changer that can transform the electricity market just as wireless technologies transformed telecommunications and the ways that we live and work. For energy policies, the “rubber hits the road” before the state public utilities commissions, which can either promote competition spurring innovative new clean technologies or create barriers to new market entrants.


ELPC advocates led the charge to pass the improved Illinois Renewable Energy Standard that will drive 3,000 megawatts of new solar energy projects and 1,350 megawatts of wind power. That includes new community solar development providing value for all consumers and transforming old industrial brownfields into solar brightfields. ELPC and our coalition of solar energy businesses and community groups are now working to make sure that Illinois regulatory agencies implement the new law to achieve its full potential benefits of solar for all consumers and a cleaner environment.

**Boosting Clean Distributed Solar Energy in Michigan**

ELPC helped persuade the Michigan Public Service Commission to update the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978’s “avoided cost” calculation and increase buyback rates to boost distributed solar energy and cogeneration. Now, we’re working to replicate that victory in other Midwest states. ELPC is on the offense to accelerate community solar policies, and we’re fighting back against barriers to solar development and subsidies for old coal plants.

**Enacting Innovative Clean Energy Financing Tools in Illinois**

ELPC’s sustained advocacy resulted in the new Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) legislation that eases financing of energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements for commercial and multifamily buildings. The PACE financing mechanism provides upfront capital for retrofits that produce net clean energy savings while the costs are spread over time through the property tax assessment. Good for consumers, good for the environment.

**Stopping Peabody Energy’s Attempt to Shift Its Mine Reclamation and Cleanup Costs to the Public**

ELPC took on and won against Peabody Energy, the world’s largest coal mining company and prominent climate change denier. Peabody filed for bankruptcy and tried to escape its $1.4 billion of mine reclamation responsibilities by “self-bonding” and transferring the risks of those costs onto taxpayers. ELPC successfully intervened before the U.S. Bankruptcy Court, gained precedential rulings, and forced Peabody to buy surety bonds for all of its reclamation obligations as a condition for its reorganization. Victory for both taxpayers and the environment. Flawed self-bonding ended, coal subsidies reduced.

**Learn more at www.ELPC.org**
President Trump won his election in the Great Lakes states, but his misguided policies and budgets amount to a puzzling “War on the Great Lakes.” His proposed budget slashes the sensible Great Lakes Restoration Initiative from $300 million to $0. The EPA is rolling back common sense Clean Water Act standards that protect safe clean drinking water. When the Administration suggested moving EPA’s regional headquarters from Chicago to Lenexa, Kansas, ELPC exposed this proposal to the public ridicule it deserved, and the EPA backed down.

The Great Lakes are our great natural treasure. This is where Midwesterners live, work and play. Protecting the Great Lakes has strong bipartisan support. Safe clean drinking water is not partisan at all. We all care – a lot.

Fighting Back Against Trump’s Zeroing-Out the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative – and Winning!

When the Administration’s proposed budget zeroed out funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, ELPC and our partners pushed back hard and effectively. This successful initiative has supported 3,000 projects to keep the lakes clean, preserve shorelines, restore wetlands and watersheds, and protect safe clean drinking water. ELPC helped mobilize the public and gained strong bipartisan policymaker support. The U.S. House of Representatives has voted to restore the full funding of $300 million annually, and we are cautiously optimistic about succeeding in the Senate going forward.

Protecting Lake Erie Against Toxic Blue-Green Algae

ELPC attorneys filed a federal court lawsuit to overturn the U.S. EPA’s approval of the Ohio EPA’s flawed finding that Western Lake Erie is somehow not “impaired” by phosphorus pollution. In the Toledo area, 500,000 people were without drinking water for three days in 2014 due to toxic blue-green algae, which continues to threaten safe clean drinking water, fisheries and ecological health. That’s unacceptable. This ELPC litigation can be a key Clean Water Act precedent. We play to win in both the courts of law and the courts of public opinion.

Protecting the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary in Lake Huron

ELPC is leading the charge against the Administration’s “review” to allow oil drilling and cut down the size of the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary in Lake Huron. Visitors come to explore “Shipwreck Alley” and learn about Great Lakes maritime history. Federal law and Michigan law prohibit offshore oil drilling in the Great Lakes. Both Michigan Senators and bipartisan Representatives oppose this misguided proposal. ELPC’s advocacy with 14 Great Lakes group partners focuses on explaining why America’s only fresh water National Marine Sanctuary must be protected.
Accelerating Cleaner Modern Transportation Technologies

The transportation sector now produces more carbon pollution than does the electricity sector, but the sources – cars, trucks, airplanes, buses, trains, road equipment – are more diffuse. ELPC has built a very strong transportation team focusing on advancing savvy policies to accelerate cleaner cars, trucks and buses. In 2017, we made progress toward achieving the vision of a modern Midwest high-speed rail network hubbed in a modernized Chicago Union Station. ELPC is the nation’s leading environmental NGO focused on policies to optimize environmental performance of autonomous vehicles, and we are advancing state policies to accelerate electric vehicles as the federal government pulls back. Whether you bike, walk, ride or drive, ELPC is advancing a more sustainable lower-carbon transportation future.

Advancing Electric Vehicles Through Improved Charging Infrastructure

Smart policies combined with technological innovations are driving the market growth of new electric vehicles. Electricity policies and transportation policies are converging. For example, ELPC worked with American Electric Power to design a $10 million plan to incentivize apartment building owners and businesses to install 375 EV charging stations in Ohio, and we are moving forward in Illinois and Michigan. ELPC is gearing up a campaign for Midwest cities to purchase new EVs for their municipal fleets, stepping up with climate solution actions as the federal government sadly steps back.

Revitalizing the Chicago (Underground) Pedway

The Chicago Pedway is an underutilized civic asset. ELPC is leading an innovative civic entrepreneurial coalition project to revitalize and improve the Pedway, transforming it into an underground, all-weather public pedestrian space enlivened by art, history and accessibility to Chicago’s transit, civic, cultural and business centers. This ELPC-coordinated green design project can make the downtown more pedestrian friendly and better connect the transit stations. ELPC retained an urban design team to propose initial planning concepts that improve “Navigation, Coordination and Activation” in the Pedway’s “Main Stem.” Stay tuned in 2018 for progress!

Advancing Clean Electric School Buses and Cleaner Air for Kids

ELPC led a Midwest tour highlighting how new electric school buses can better protect children’s health by avoiding harmful pollution from older diesel-powered buses. The VW settlement funds provide potential financial support for school districts to upgrade their bus fleets. ELPC is educating school officials and policymakers on these opportunities to modernize fleets and protect kids. As states receive money from the $2.7 billion settlement fund in 2018, we expect to see more electric school buses rolling off the assembly lines and onto local school routes.

Protecting the Midwest’s Wild and Natural Places

ELPC’s top-rate team of public interest environmental litigation attorneys – one of our strongest weapons – is striking back with our conservation group partners to protect some of the Midwest’s most special places. ELPC attorneys are representing the Driftless Area Land Conservancy to protect the scenic Wisconsin Driftless Area’s wildlife, waterways and parklands from a proposed controversial, huge, unneeded, high-voltage transmission line and 17-story tall towers that would cut a large swath across this beautiful landscape. ELPC attorneys are challenging oil pipelines through the Northern Minnesota Headwaters of the Mississippi River and in the Straits of Mackinac, which connects Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. These places warrant special protections from the risks of a tragic oil spill. ELPC attorneys continue to represent our conservation group clients in federal and state courts to protect the remarkable Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie in Northern Illinois and the tranquil and beautiful Sylvania Wilderness Area in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula.
ELPC Leadership: Board of Directors & Advisory Councils
THE MIDWEST’S LEADER IN LAW, POLICY, ECO-BUSINESS INNOVATION & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

2017 ELPC Dinner & Celebration
SEPTEMBER 14, 2017

Cameron Avery, Treasurer
Ellen C. Craig, Secretary
Harry W. Drucker, Chair
Simon Fish
Manny Flores
Art Gibson
Stan Goldblatt

Joel Blum
Tony L. Goldberg
Marilu Hastings
Jessica Hellmann

Robert L. Graham
Scott Heidepriem
Daniel Levin, Vice Chair
Carl Lingenfelter
Lois Lipton
Nancy Loeb
William McNary

Knute Nadelhoffer
Andrew Ross
Smita Shah
David Wilhelm
Brady C. Williamson
Howard A. Learner, Executive Director

Sciences Advisory Council

Knute Nadelhoffer
Jonathan Patz
Barbara Peckarsky
Mark Ratner

Nicholas Ro
Nancy Tuchman
Donald M. Waller, Chair
Donald Wuebbles

Iowa Advisory Council

Laurie Belin
Liz Garst
Larry Grimstad

Charlotte Hubbell
Fred Hubbell
Sally Pederson

Rob Sand
Barry Shear
Tom Urban

Michigan Advisory Council

Lauren Bigelow
George Covington
James Dearing
Kiff Hamp
George Heartwell

Addison Igleheart
Debby Igleheart
Knute Nadelhoffer
Thomas S. Porter
Lorna Puttkammer Straus

Gary R. Rentrop, Chair
Tracey Shafroth
Gary Stewart
Bob Zabors

South Dakota Advisory Council

David Chicoine
Van Fishback

Christine Hamilton
Robert C. Oliver

Catherine V. Piersol
Scott Heidepriem

Next Generation Advisory Council

Charles Adler
Laud Azu
Gina Chen
Tomas de’Medici, Co-Chair
Derek Eder
Amy Ewaldt

Nick Poplawski
Corey Schires
Colleen Smith, Co-Chair
Jeff Smith

Jack Godshall
Carey Goldblatt
Drew Gravitt
Erik Gullickson
Libby Joyce
Rajesh Karmani

HEADQUARTERS
35 East Wacker Drive
Suite 1600
Chicago, Illinois 60601
(312) 673-6500

ONLINE
ELPC.org
elpcinfo@elpc.org
Twitter @ELPCenter
Facebook /ELPCenter

REGIONAL OFFICES
Columbus, OH
Des Moines, IA
Duluth, MN
Grand Rapids, MI
Indianapolis, IN
Jamestown, ND
Madison, WI
Minneapolis, MN
Sioux Falls, SD
Washington, D.C.

“...the best defense is a good offense. ELPC is on the offense to accelerate clean energy and clean transportation, and protect the Great Lakes with safe clean drinking water for all.”

ELPC Executive Director
Howard A. Learner

ELPC’s 2017 Dinner & Celebration brought together 450 business, civic and environmental leaders to network and hear an expert panel on how businesses are accelerating the transition to clean renewable energy. Art Gibson (VP EHS & Sustainability, Baxter Int’l), Danielle Merfield (CTO, GE Renewable Energy), and Mark Vanderhelm (VP Energy, Walmart) presented their businesses’ leadership in spurring global clean energy innovation and development.
The Environmental Law & Policy Center is the Midwest’s premier public interest environmental legal advocacy and eco-business innovation organization, and we are among the nation’s leaders. We develop and lead successful strategic advocacy campaigns to improve environmental quality and protect vital natural resources. We are public interest environmental entrepreneurs who engage in creative business dealmaking with diverse interests to put into practice our belief that environmental progress and economic development can be achieved together to improve the quality of life in our Midwest communities and save the planet.

A Message From ELPC’s Board Chair & Executive Director

This is an extraordinary time, and a time for extraordinary action. The Trump Administration does not share ELPC’s and most Midwesterners’ core environmental and public health values. The Trump Administration is trying to rapidly change the course of 50 years of American progress toward safer, cleaner drinking water, healthier air to breathe, and communities with fewer toxic threats.

ELPC is fighting back and playing to win. ELPC’s effective strategic litigation and public advocacy are more vital than ever to confront the Trump Administration’s anti-environmental agenda in the Midwest and challenge Trump’s “War on the Great Lakes.”

The best defense is a good offense! There are opportunities for positive progress to accelerate innovative clean energy and clean transportation solutions to climate change problems, protect safe clean drinking water and healthy clean air, and protect the Great Lakes and other vital Midwest natural resources. ELPC plays to win in these challenging times in the Midwest states where ELPC focuses, leads and knows how to get things done. We’ve been doing this successfully for 24 years and here’s why:

**ELPC Learns the Facts and Data:** Shortly after President Trump was elected, ELPC commissioned researcher Ann Selzer to help us learn more about Trump voters’ environmental views in swing areas of key swing Midwest states. Ann conducted 12 focus groups of Trump voters in Grand Rapids, Toledo and Fort Wayne.

We learned these voters care strongly about protecting the Great Lakes. We learned they care deeply about protecting safe clean drinking water. They understand that regulations are necessary because pollution upstream or next door can contaminate our drinking water. And, we all like to swim in clean lakes. We listened and learned. ELPC put those lessons to work in framing and fighting back effectively against Trump’s “War on the Great Lakes.”

**ELPC Litigates and Plays to Win:** ELPC doesn’t just “fight the good fight.” ELPC plays to win. ELPC’s top-rate team of public interest attorneys is striking back in the courts to protect safe clean water, healthy clean air, and the Midwest’s Wild and Natural Places. While the federal government is stepping back from climate actions, ELPC attorneys and policy advocates are stepping up to seize strategic opportunities to advance clean energy and clean transportation solutions in Midwest cities and states. We strategically target ELPC’s resources to achieve better environmental quality for all and protect vital natural resources.

**ELPC Innovates with New Technologies:** With the Trump Administration cutting environmental monitoring and enforcement budgets, ELPC is at the leading edge working with community partners to deploy new handheld air quality monitors to determine particulate pollution levels in urban neighborhoods. This citizen science data can identify “hot spots” and drive ELPC advocacy with targeted environmental solutions focused on reducing pollution sources to better protect public health.

**ELPC Really Gets that Environmental Progress and Economic Growth Can Be Achieved Together:** That Midwestern value is in ELPC’s DNA. We put that sustainability principle into practice by accelerating solar energy and wind power that are good for jobs, good for economic growth and good for the environment. Likewise, by accelerating electric vehicle policies and modernizing the Midwest higher-speed rail network. Likewise, we’re advancing wise stewardship of our fresh water resources. For ELPC, this is a guiding principle, not just a sound bite. It’s the way that ELPC succeeds.

That’s what ELPC does. We play to win. We know how to get things accomplished. We’re driven to make a major difference here in the Midwest and nationally.

Thank you for all that you do to help ELPC succeed. We will win in these extraordinary times, as ELPC enters our 25th year, moving forward together.

Harry

---

**www.ELPC.org/Donate**

ELPC earned Charity Navigator’s “exceptional!” 4-star rating, which means we “exceed industry standards and outperform most charities in our cause.”

ELPC earned Guidestar's highest "gold" rating for our commitment to transparency.