

# Here are the reasons your electric bill may be higher

By **RICHARD MARK**

Dramatic changes in global energy markets are being felt here at home. As news media have reported, power prices are increasing significantly and will have an impact on customer electric bills. We want to make sure our customers have the facts about this situation.

It is important to be clear that Ameren Illinois does not generate energy and does not profit from electric supply charges. Electricity is procured by an Illinois state agency and the costs are passed directly to customers, dollar-for-dollar. Customers pay Ameren Illinois a delivery charge for maintaining the electric grid and distributing reliable power to homes and businesses. Delivery and Supply are

separate charges on the monthly bill.

The primary reason many will see an increase in their monthly bill is because of the rise in the electric supply costs, which are collected on utility bills and paid directly to power suppliers. Inflation, the conflict in eastern Europe, high natural gas prices, and the closure of coal-fired electric generation facilities have caused an energy shortage, increasing power prices across the country compared to the same time last year. Because power supply prices have more than doubled, the typical residential customer in the Ameren Illinois service territory is expected to see a 54 percent increase in their energy bill starting in June of 2022. The actual impact will depend on the amount of energy used.

One of the benefits of living in Illinois

is that you have the choice to receive your power supply through the Basic Generation Service from Ameren Illinois or through a certified Retail Electric Supplier. We encourage you to explore your options by visiting the Illinois Commerce Commission’s website – [PlugInIllinois.org](http://PlugInIllinois.org).

In addition, the federal grid operator, the Mid Continent Independent System Operator (MISO), warned that regions without sufficient generation could see temporary, controlled power outages this summer to protect the overall energy grid. We’re confident that our delivery system is stable and reliable and power will be there when it is needed. If MISO calls for a load-shedding event, it will be implemented with a focus on safety and

minimizing disruptions for our customers.

Finally, if you are facing difficulties paying your energy bill, please know that there are resources available. Income-qualified customers are encouraged to apply for hundreds of millions of dollars in available funding from the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Plus, Ameren Illinois is offering lower down payments for extended payment agreements through July 31, flexible payment options, and helpful energy efficiency programs. For more information on the power supply issue and links to these resources, visit [AmerenIllinois.com/Updates](http://AmerenIllinois.com/Updates).

*Richard Mark, is chairman and president, Ameren Illinois*

# Health-care systems must take the lead on health inequity now

*This column is written by Roxanna Crosser, chief executive officer of OSF Healthcare’s western region, and Dr. Jeff Tillery, president of the OSF Medical Group. The piece intends to begin a dialogue about diversity, equity and inclusion with members of the communities that OSF serves.*

At OSF HealthCare, justice is one of our core values. We recognize and respect the personal worth and dignity of every person we serve regardless of race, color, religion and ability to pay. At the same time, we realize that we need intense focus on our underserved communities.

Health inequity is real, and there are preventable differences in medical care and health outcomes. Many of our patients face a combination of challenges: lack of access to treatment, transportation, healthy foods and education on healthy behaviors.

At first, the basics such as transportation and education may not seem like

health care, but in reality, they are essential to better health outcomes. Social and economic barriers contribute significantly to health disparities. We are developing innovative care delivery models and community resources, but disparities continue.

At OSF, we strive to serve every patient with the greatest care and love. We seek to provide care and support with our communities, not to our communities. We recognize that as a first step, we are called to examine the ways in which we have fallen short.

We want to understand ourselves and to learn how to serve more effectively. We are taking steps: from requiring bias training for all OSF leaders to using clearer language in communicating with patients to carefully selecting vendors and business partners.

We have empowered a Health Equity Action Council, made up of OSF leaders, to analyze the issues as we

continue to pursue diversity, equity and inclusion. They are already partnering with community leaders in Peoria, where OSF is headquartered, including the mayor, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People president and other key stakeholders.

Through analysis and experience, we have discovered that the risk of heart failure and hospital readmissions on the part of African-American

patients is higher — a sign that we need to make changes in the treatment and services that we provide them.

This is just one example of the health inequity in the communities we serve. OSF is committed to addressing the range of disparities and underlying causes. We are open to collaborating with any community partner willing to face the challenges of creating a healthier and more just society.

## Letter to the Editor

Business journal publications, historically and traditionally are advocates for business and supportive of issues that strengthens the business climate.

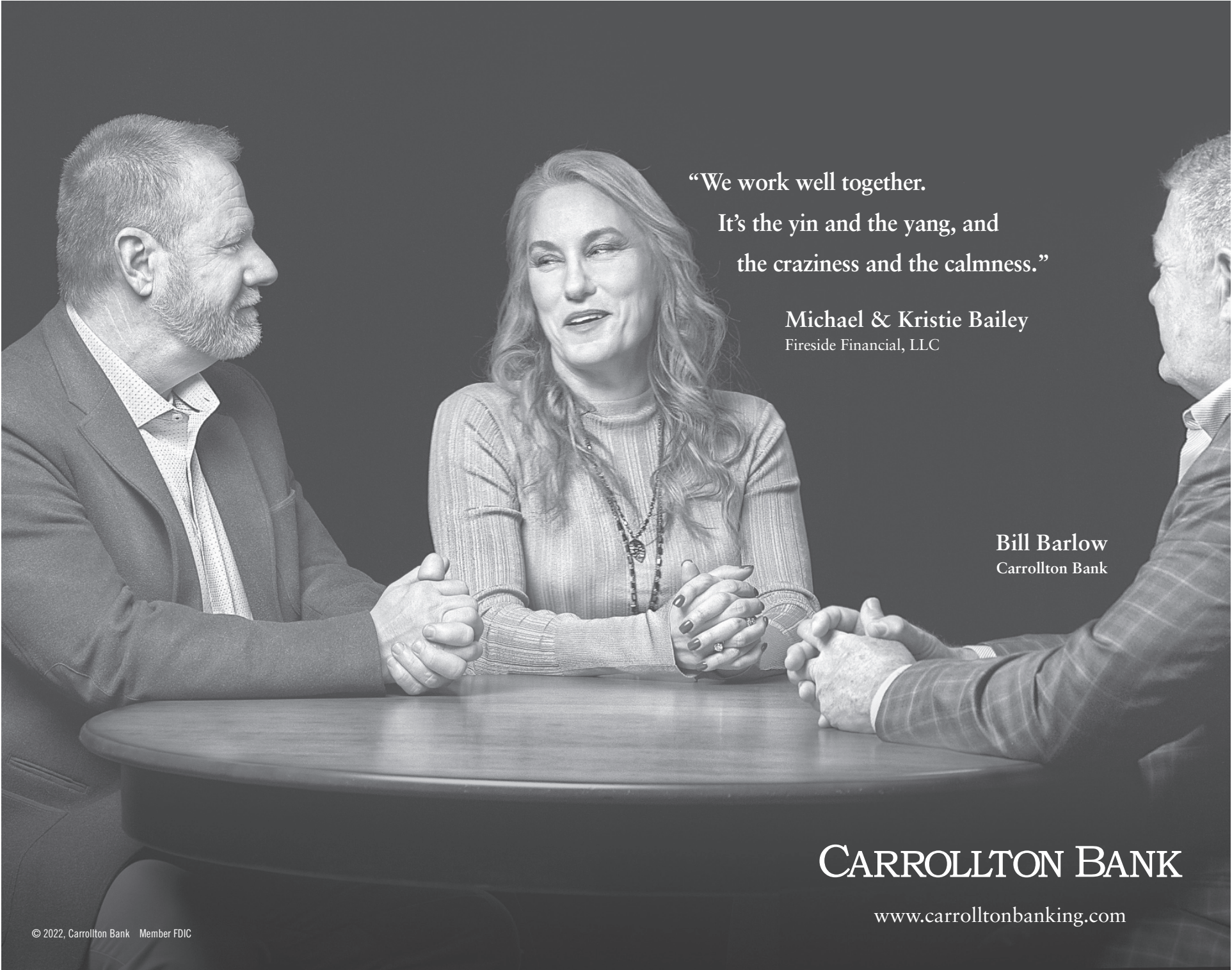
The editorial platform of most business papers is to promote sound conservative fiscal and social principles and values.

The IBJ through its opinion writers oftentimes does not follow that

line of thinking. Their opinion offering is usually one hundred and eighty degrees in the opposite direction.

A realignment of their positions might be in order or the taking of a similar position at Left Bank Books.

*WAYNE BARBER JR., principal, BARBERMURPHY Group*



“We work well together.  
It’s the yin and the yang, and  
the craziness and the calmness.”

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