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**Poster Title:** A Bright Idea? Targeting low Income Customers in an Upstream Program

**Abstract:** In 2018, a series of new Income Eligible Energy Efficiency (EE) Programs was introduced by an Illinois Utility to address the large number of low-income households within its service territory. These programs were created to specifically target low income customers who face energy burdens that are, on average, 4-times larger than those faced by non-low income customers. In general, low income customers tend to have less efficient homes and are in the most need of efficiency upgrades, yet, they face the largest barriers to participation in traditional utility EE programs.

One of these new Income Eligible programs is a residential lighting program that employs an upstream delivery approach similar to the traditional residential lighting program offered to residential customers for more than 10 years. The Income Eligible Program provides larger incentives on high efficiency LED lamps and fixtures than the utility's traditional program and is administered at retail store locations that are believed to serve, in part or in full, customers with incomes at or below 80% of the Area Median Income. Unfortunately, due to the upstream implementation of both programs, there is no way to reliably ensure the Income Eligible program bulbs are being sold exclusively to the low income customers the program is designed to serve.

This poster presents findings and recommendations from a joint evaluation of the traditional and Income Eligible residential lighting programs. Evaluation results will be presented to illustrate the effectiveness of the 2018 Income Eligible program in reaching the targeted low income customers and helping them overcome the barriers to purchasing high efficiency lighting. This poster will also include findings regarding the differences between the two programs with respect to 1) participant demographics, 2) the distribution of incentives across low, middle, and high-income customers, and 3) the relationship between the evaluation estimated Net-to-Gross ratios, program incentive levels, and participant income levels. Visual content of the presentation will include tables and graphs that highlight the analysis described above and text that describes key findings and recommendations. The data used for this analysis are based on in-store intercept surveys, which allow the evaluation team to directly interview customers as they are making purchasing decisions. The in-store intercept surveys used for the joint evaluation were fielded between August and October of 2018.

In addition to the presentation of findings and recommendations from the recently deployed Income Eligible program, evaluators will also benefit from the discussion of in-store intercept surveys, data collection, and the analytical approach utilized for identifying incentive recipients. It is crucial for evaluators of similar programs to understand who is receiving incentives to ensure the program is effectively reaching the intended customer segment and that additional program spending is helping to achieve program goals.