



First Regional

U.S. HYDROGEN POLICY LEADERS CONVENTION

PENNSYLVANIA

**August 14-15 | Hilton Garden Inn Pittsburgh Airport
Pittsburgh, PA**

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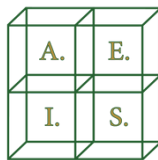


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Regional Hydrogen Policy Leaders Convention 2024



DAY 1

Wednesday, August 14, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

6:00 – 8:00 PM

REGISTRATION & WELCOME RECEPTION

- Welcome by USHA Board of Directors & Executive Director

DAY 2

Thursday, August 15, 8:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

8:00 – 9:00 AM

BREAKFAST & FUEL CELL ELECTRIC BUS RIDE & TOUR

9:00 – 9:10 AM

WELCOME

Roxana Bekemohammadi, Founder & Executive Director of the United States Hydrogen Alliance

9:10 – 9:20 AM

WELCOME

Pennsylvania State Representative Valerie Gaydos

9:20 – 9:35 AM

KEYNOTE: U.S. Hydrogen Landscape

Tim Sasseen, Director, Market Development and Public Affairs North America at Ballard Power Systems

9:35 – 10:05 AM

FIRESIDE CHAT: Hydrogen Adoption by Transit Agencies

- John Jones, Zero Emissions Program Manager at Pittsburgh Regional Transit
- Mark Finnicum, Chief Operations Officer, Stark Area Regional Transit Authority
- Tim Sasseen, Director, Market Development and Public Affairs North America at Ballard Power Systems
- Roxana Bekemohammadi, Founder & Executive Director USHA

10:05 – 10:50 AM

PANEL: Policies to Enable Hydrogen Private Finance

- Doug Doan, General Partner at Hivers and Strivers Fund
- Ali Amirali, Senior Vice President Starwood Energy Group Global, Inc.
- Rich DiClaudio, Managing Director and CEO of Bedford MP
- Roxana Bekemohammadi, Founder & Executive Director USHA

Regional Hydrogen Policy Leaders Convention 2024



DAY 2

Continued

Thursday, August 15, 8:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

10:50 – 11:00 AM

COFFEE BREAK

11:00 – 11:45 AM

PANEL: Working Together to Decarbonize Western PA

- Brent Bobsein, Vice President of Sustainable Development at CNX
- Dan Alwine, Vice President of Government Affairs, Allegheny Conference on Community Development
- Chad Willis, Director, Planning for the Allegheny County Airport Authority
- Roxana Bekemohammadi, Founder & Executive Director USHA

11:45 – 12:00 PM

KEYNOTE: Pennsylvania's Hydrogen Future

Maximilian A. Schultz: Director of Energy Innovation, Infrastructure, and Coordination at Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

12:00 – 12:55 PM

LUNCH BREAK

12:55 – 1:40 PM

PANEL: Hydrogen Hubs - Opportunities and Challenges

- Bernard Brown, Chief Operating Officer at Empire Diversified Energy
- Manny Citron, VP of Partnerships and Community Engagement at the Mid-Atlantic Clean Hydrogen Hub (MACH2)
- Melanie White, Director of Strategic Engagement at Allegheny Science & Technology and Community Benefits Manager for the Appalachian Regional Clean Hydrogen Hub
- William Lehner, Founder/CSO at Independence Hydrogen
- Tom Murphy, Senior Managing Director, Strategic Energy Initiatives at Team Pennsylvania
- Roxana Bekemohammadi, Founder & Executive Director USHA

1:40 – 2:10 PM

FIRESIDE CHAT: Policymakers on Building Hydrogen Economies

- Pennsylvania State Representative Valerie Gaydos
- Pennsylvania State Representative Erik Nelson

Regional Hydrogen Policy Leaders Convention 2024



DAY 2

Continued

Thursday, August 15, 8:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

2:10 – 2:55 PM

PANEL: Forecasting the Future of Hydrogen Derived from Nuclear

- Paul Amico, VP of International Energy and Utilities Practice at Jensen Hughes
- Dylan Sylvester, Senior Engineer at Xcel Energy
- Dr. Shannon Bragg-Sitton, Director for the Integrated Energy and Storage Systems Division at Idaho National Laboratory

2:55 – 3:05 PM

COFFEE BREAK

3:05 – 3:20 PM

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Hydrogen Long-Duration Storage

- Edward Tygard, President at Wishgard

3:20 – 3:50 PM

PANEL: Hydrogen Production Pathways

- David McCarthy, Vice President, Green Hydrogen at 174 Power Global
- Bernard Brown, Chief Operating Officer at Empire Diversified Energy
- William Lehner, Founder/CSO at Indepence Hydrogen
- Roxana Bekemohammadi, Founder & Executive Director USHA

3:50 – 4:00 PM

CLOSING REMARKS

Roxana Bekemohammadi, Founder & Executive Director of the United States Hydrogen Alliance

4:00 – 5:30 PM

CLOSING RECEPTION

Speaker Biographies



ROXANA BEKEMOHAMMADI

Founder & Executive Director, U.S. Hydrogen Alliance

Roxana is a fuel cell engineer and a passionate advocate for the adoption of fuel cell and hydrogen technologies, climate resilience, energy efficiency, economic and workforce development. Roxana started her career as a hydrogen expert at the California Air Resources Board (CARB), a dream of hers since the age of 15. At CARB, she helped develop two landmark clean transportation initiatives and wrote the hydrogen portion of the Governor's Zero Emission Community Readiness Guidebook. Roxana transitioned out of government and into the advocacy space, eventually forming USHA (formerly known as the Western States Hydrogen Alliance) where she employs her technical and advocacy skills to serve the nation's efforts to transform its energy and transportation systems.

She holds a Masters Degree in Environmental Engineering from the National Fuel Cell Research Center and earned her Bachelor's of Science degree in Chemical Engineering from University of California, Los Angeles.



VALERIE GAYDOS

Pennsylvania State Representative

Rep. Valerie Gaydos has been a leader in fighting to make government more efficient, transparent and accountable to the citizens of the Commonwealth. She was elected to serve her third term in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in November 2022 and will continue to be committed to putting her experience from the private sector to work to help grow the state's economy and improve opportunities for employers and employees across the Commonwealth. Valerie has been assigned to serve on the House Government Oversight, Liquor Control (Secretary), Commerce and Professional Licensure committees for the 2023-24 Legislative Session. Supplementing her work with the small business community, job creators, and schools and universities, Valerie serves on the advisory committee for Standing Firm, an organization aimed at ending partner violence; a guardian and advisor for the Pittsburgh Honor Flight Network, which helps take veterans to Washington, D.C., to tour war memorials; and a member of Firearms Owners Against Crime. She is an avid outdoor enthusiast, nature lover and dog rescue volunteer.

Speaker Biographies



TIM SASSEEN

Director, Market Development and Public Affairs, North America, Ballard Power Systems & Board President, United States Hydrogen Alliance

Tim started work with Ballard over 20 years ago, leading the engine control software development team for the first Mercedes fuel cell buses that were deployed in public service across seven European cities. Tim has served in Ballard's Field Service team in Europe, coordinating field operations when these buses were delivered and deployed, and lead the Electrical Engineering design team for Ballard's 6th generation of fuel cell module. Outside of Ballard, Tim has worked extensively in the wind energy, where his teams designed mid-sized wind turbines, megawatt-scale power systems, and advanced power converters. Tim earned his MBA at UCSD while working in microgrid design and renewable generation project development, before returning to Ballard in 2018 for his present position, where he directs Ballard's market development and public affairs for North America. In addition to the MBA, Tim has earned Bachelor and Master of Science degrees in electrical engineering from Michigan Technological University.



JOHN JONES

PRT Zero Emissions Program Manager

John Jones joined the team at Pittsburgh Regional Transit (PRT) in 2023. Mr. Jones' career in the transportation industry spans 48 years and he has held nearly every position within the industry over that time. Prior to coming to PRT, Mr. Jones was Director of Maintenance at TARTA in Toledo, Ohio where he initiated that transit property's transition to electric buses. Prior to his time in Toledo, he was CEO at public transportation organizations in Wyoming, Virginia, Colorado, and Ohio. He has also directed school bus operations in Ohio and Virginia. Mr. Jones holds a Bachelor of Science in business administration from the Franciscan University of Steubenville (Ohio) along with continuing education credit from the National Transit Institute for additional course work related to planning, public involvement, and procurement. He has also completed Pendaran, Inc.'s Virtual Workplace and Structured Problem Solving courses. In addition to his education Mr. Jones is also an ASE Certified Master Heavy Duty Truck and Bus technician, a woodworker, and enjoys running, camping, and hiking.

Speaker Biographies



MARK FINNICUM

Chief Operations Officer, Stark Area Regional Transit Authority

Mark Finnicum has been the Chief Operations Officer who oversees the daily operations of both the Maintenance and Transportation Departments for SARTA since 2014.

Mark began his career at SARTA in 2005 as the Parts and Inventory Supervisor before becoming the Director of Maintenance in 2007. Mark has been involved with the building and expansion of SARTA's alternative fueling stations and oversee the deployment of both the CNG and hydrogen fuel cell fleet.

Currently, Mark serves as a member of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) Electric Transit User Group, the Vice-Chair of the OPTA Safety and Security Committee, Ohio Transit Risk Pool, and the Midwest Zero-Emission Bus Working Group.



DOUG DOAN

Hivers and Strivers Fund

As a General Partner at Hivers and Strivers, I invest exclusively in companies led and founded by military vets and especially grads of US Service Academies. With over 14 years of experience in this niche sector, I have developed a deep understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities that veteran entrepreneurs face in the market.

My mission is to support and empower veteran-led startups with capital, mentorship, and access to a network of fellow investors and founders who share the same values and vision. I leverage my MPA from Harvard Kennedy School and my BS from West Point to evaluate the potential and impact of the ventures I back, as well as to provide strategic guidance and leadership. I am passionate about helping veteran founders achieve their goals and create value for their customers, communities, and stakeholders.

Speaker Biographies



ALI AMIRALI

Senior Vice President Starwood Energy Group Global, Inc.

Mr. Amirali is a Senior Vice President of Starwood Energy Group Global, Inc. and is responsible for expansion of the existing StarTrans assets as well as seeking new business/project opportunities in the transmission, distribution, microgrids and biomass arena in North America. In addition, Mr. Amirali also supports the origination, development and acquisition activities associated with utility scale conventional and renewable power generation, biomass opportunities, transmission and energy storage projects. Mr. Amirali has over 29 years of experience in the power and energy sector with emphasis in transmission and generation development and operations, power marketing and contracts, regulatory compliance, and market design. Prior to joining Starwood Energy, he held a variety of key technical and leadership positions at Element Power, LS Power, Calpine Corporation, California Independent Systems Operator and Pacific Gas and Electric Company. Mr. Amirali has participated in the development and interconnection of over 5,000 megawatts of electric generation and approximately 1000 miles of high-voltage transmission lines in the Western U.S. and Mexico and has developed and managed several large transmission line projects designed to improve reliability, reduce congestion, and deliver energy from thermal and renewable resources.



RICH DICLAUDIO

Managing Director and CEO of Bedford MP

Rich is an energy transition expert with over 35 years' experience advising, investing, and operating in the energy, energy tech, and energy transition space, including as President and CEO of Energy Innovation Center Institute, Inc., CEO of Bedford Management Partners, past CEO of Blue Tip Energy (an energy and energy tech private equity fund), past EVP & COO Hillman Energy (sub of the Hillman Company). Rich is an internationally recognized expert on sustainability, resiliency, all phases of the energy transition value chain, and equitable workforce development. Rich serves on many boards, including currently on the \$15 billion UPMC Health Plan, and two energy transition tech companies. He is often called on to testify, speak, and lecture on energy transition, security, and impact topics at various summits, universities, and before governing bodies.

Speaker Biographies



BRENT BOBSEIN

Vice President of Sustainable Development at CNX

Brent Bobsein is the Vice President of Sustainable Development at CNX Resources, the operator of the largest CMM capture for beneficial use project in the United States. In his role, he is responsible for developing and commercializing emerging technology, expanding CMM capture and providing low carbon energy solutions. He was the commercial and technical lead on CNX's announced partnership with Pittsburgh Airport and Key State on the PIT SAF and hydrogen project, participation in the US DOE's Hydrogen hub, and generation of Pennsylvania Tier 1 Alternative energy credits. He and CNX are continuing to pursue new pathways to provide the necessary economic support required for project development on low carbon fuels. Mr. Bobsein graduated Cum Laude with a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Case Western Reserve University.



DAN ALWINE

Vice President of Government Affairs, Allegheny Conference on Community Development

Dan Alwine serves as the vice president of government affairs for the Allegheny Conference on Community Development, a position he assumed in March 2023. In this role, Dan directs the organization's policies and objectives involving state and federal government and political affairs. Prior to joining the Conference, Dan served as the director of strategic initiatives and policy at the Pittsburgh region's Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission. Throughout his career, Dan has also served as chief of staff and district director in the State Senate, as well as a staffer with the U.S. House of Representatives.

Speaker Biographies



CHAD WILLIS

Director, Planning for the Allegheny County Airport Authority

Chad Willis serves as the Director, Planning for the Allegheny County Airport Authority (ACAA) where he leads a team of professionals who work on key projects in capital planning, environmental compliance and sustainable green energy for the Authority. Prior to this, he held similar roles with the Sacramento County Department of Airports, Phoenix Mesa Gateway Airport Authority, and the Arizona Department of Transportation. Before working in aviation, Chad worked as a forensic anthropologist, college professor, environmental consultant and a researcher for the United States Department of Defense. He has had a lifelong love for aviation, having trained for his pilots license at the age of 17. Chad is active in industry associations, having served as past chair of Airport Council International-North America's (ACI-NA) Environmental Working Group and currently serving as the North American representative to ACIs World Environment Standing Committee.



MAXIMILIAN A. SCHULTZ

Director of Energy Innovation, Infrastructure, and Coordination at Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

Max Schultz is the Director of Energy Infrastructure Solutions, within the Pennsylvania Governor's Office, where he leads transformative efforts to drive energy transitions and decarbonization across the Commonwealth. With a focus on harnessing the potential of hydrogen, Max is at the forefront of reducing emissions, advancing industry and manufacturing, and stimulating modern energy infrastructure investments. His work emphasizes not only environmental sustainability but also economic equity and job creation. Through Max's efforts, strides are being made in the deployment of hydrogen technologies. He is spearheading initiatives to develop a robust hydrogen economy, leveraging both financial strategies and policy frameworks to support this transformative sector. Max's vision is to position the Commonwealth as a hydrogen leader, fostering a cleaner, more equitable future through strategic advancements in energy infrastructure. Prior to his current role, Max worked at the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection as the Deputy Policy Director for Energy Resources, helping to implement strategies and advance the Governor's legislative priorities in the mining, oil and gas, and clean energy industries. Max joined the Commonwealth from McCarter & English, LLP where he worked as a business and environmental litigation associate advising clients on the strategic implications of their business and litigation decisions and emerging challenges. Max is a proud Double Terp, graduating from the University of Maryland with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and the University of Maryland School of Law with a Juris Doctor degree.

Speaker Biographies



BERNARD BROWN

Chief Operating Officer at Empire Diversified Energy

Bernard has over 20 years of public and private experience involving project development. Mr. Brown joined Empire Diversified Energy where he now serves as a Chief Operating Officer utilizing his ability skills to lead teams through project development, execution and organize project priorities to maintain alignment on project goals leading to measurable results. Mr. Brown maintains an understanding of energy projects in design, permitting, construction, and execution. Mr. Brown utilizes project experience to support the company's vision of bettering the planet by focusing on projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance resource efficiency. Mr. Brown's current role as Chief Operating Officer for Empire Diversified Energy has been a transformational leadership role for the company. He led the development of the company's first waste to energy development project using innovative pyrolysis technology. He was responsible for the financing of the project and establishing the Investment Tax Credit for the project. Additionally, Mr. Brown was the Chief Architect for EDE winning a highly competitive federal award in the ARCH2 hydrogen hub. This award pivoted the company to allow Mr. Brown to help lead the company into an acquisition. Mr. Brown is responsible for helping to lead the development of EDE's Class III railroad and continuous port development.



MANNY CITRON

VP of Partnerships and Community Engagement at the Mid-Atlantic Clean Hydrogen Hub (MACH2)

Manny Citron is the VP of Partnerships and Community Engagement for MACH2, the Mid-Atlantic Clean Hydrogen Hub. Prior to joining the hub in April 2024, Manny spent the last fourteen years in public service, first as a staffer at the PA house of Representatives, and then in a series of leadership positions with the City of Philadelphia. Most recently, Manny served as the Chief of Staff in the Philadelphia Department of Labor where his teams were responsible for worker protection and labor standards enforcement.

He lives and works in Philadelphia, and holds Masters in Public Administration and City & Regional Planning from the Ohio State University.

Speaker Biographies



MELANIE WHITE

Director of Strategic Engagement at Allegheny Science & Technology and Community Benefits Manager for the Appalachian Regional Clean Hydrogen Hub

Melanie White is a program and project manager with over 25 years of experience in federal projects -- most of which has been working for Appalachia-based small businesses focused on technology growth within the region. Ms. White is a problem-solver and relationship builder with strong attention to detail. She approaches each client as her top priority and easily balances multiple engagements. In addition to managing corporate/community stakeholder relationships, Ms. White serves as AST's Ombudswoman and employee stakeholder to our Diversity/EEO IPT (along with our HR Director and CEO), where she works to ensure an equitable environment for AST's workforce. She is a lifelong Appalachia resident and a West Virginia University graduate. Ms. White holds certificates in DEIA and Equitable Community Change from Cornell University.



WILLIAM LEHNER

Founder/CSO at Independence Hydrogen

William Lehner, a former United States Navy officer with five combat tours as an EA-6B "Prowler" Naval Flight Officer and national security expert at the Pentagon, now leads supports Independence Hydrogen in building the American hydrogen economy. Independence Hydrogen is pioneering the first decentralized production, storage, and delivery platform, offering local hydrogen options and a unique farm-to-table business model across the Eastern United States. Independence Hydrogen sets itself apart by recycling vented H₂ from industrial processes and purifying it to the SAE-J2719 fuel cell-grade standard.

Speaker Biographies



TOM MURPHY

Senior Managing Director, Strategic Energy Initiatives at Team PA

Tom Murphy is Team Pennsylvania's Senior Managing Director, Strategic Energy Initiatives. He was previously the Director of Penn State's Marcellus Center for Outreach and Research (MCOR) and provided leadership to a range of Penn State's related energy outreach events and research activities. Tom has 38 years of experience working with public officials, researchers, industry, government agencies, and landowners during his tenure with the Extension branch of the University.

Tom's work is centered on educational consultation in energy transitions, specifically at the convergence of shale gas, hydrogen, and renewables. His more recent emphasis focuses on a rapidly changing energy paradigm, which includes wider deployment of utility-scale solar, and the decarbonization implications of hydrogen for heavy industry and transportation. Primarily focused on the DNA H2Hub project, Tom has an ongoing partnership with the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors on the local implications of utility-scale solar energy across the Commonwealth.



ERIK NELSON

Pennsylvania State Representative

A strong conservative committed to fiscal discipline and putting the taxpayers first, Eric Nelson began serving in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in 2016.

For the 2023-24 Legislative Session, he serves on the House Aging and Older Adult Services Committee, of which he serves as the Republican chair of the Subcommittee on Care and Services, as well as on the House Appropriations and Insurance committees. He is a deputy chair of the Republican Policy Committee. He also serves as the Republican Chairman of both the Gas and Oil Caucus and the Autism and Intellectual Disabilities Caucus. He is also a member of the Pro-Life and 2nd Amendment caucuses.

A native of Hempfield, Eric graduated from Hempfield Area High School and earned bachelor's and master's degrees in safety sciences from Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP). After graduating from college, Eric enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and served for eight years with deployments in Albania, Estonia, Okinawa, Spain and Thailand. He re-enlisted for an additional year of service after the 9-11 terrorist attacks.

Speaker Biographies



PAUL AMICO

VP of International Energy and Utilities Practice at Jensen Hughes

Paul is Vice President, International Energy and Utilities Practice at Jensen Hughes. He is a nuclear engineering with over 45 years of experience in risk, safety and operations of nuclear, chemical, and industrial process facilities. He has participated on projects in over two dozen countries. He is a member of the USDoC Civil Nuclear Trade Advisory Committee, the USDoC Maryland-DC District Export Council, and the ASME/ANS Joint Committee on Nuclear Risk Management. He represents Jensen Hughes on the Nuclear Hydrogen Initiative, the United States Hydrogen Alliance, the EPRI Advanced Reactor Initiative, the US Nuclear Industry Council (Chairman of the International and Finance Working Group), USITA SMR Working Group, and the Nuclear Energy Institute International Working Group. He is also an expert advisor to the International Atomic Energy Agency.



DYLAN SYLVESTER

Senior Engineer at Xcel Energy

Dylan Sylvester is a Senior Engineer for Xcel Energy in Minneapolis, MN. I've been in nuclear power for 15 years, starting as a reactor test engineer for NAVSEA08, and moving to terrestrial nuclear power in 2014 where I've been involved in regulatory programs, power operated valve testing, and am now in the Nuclear Fleet Innovation department where we focus on modernizing Xcel's nuclear fleet. He is currently the Nuclear to Hydrogen strategic lead, where he acts as the principle investigator for the Light Water Reactor Integrated Energy Systems Interface Technology Development & Demonstration project, aiming to generate carbon free hydrogen from nuclear thermal plant energy extraction and a high temperature steam electrolyzer.

Speaker Biographies



DR. SHANNON BRAGG-SITTON

Director for the Integrated Energy and Storage Systems Division at Idaho National Laboratory

Dr. Shannon Bragg-Sitton is the Director for the Integrated Energy & Storage Systems Division at Idaho National Laboratory (INL). She is internationally recognized for work on innovative applications of nuclear energy and other clean energy options to support the electricity grid, industry, and transportation. This research enables us to maximize energy utilization, increase energy production facilities' profitability, and improve grid reliability and resilience. Among many leadership roles she has held during her career, Shannon served from 2014-2023 as the National Technical Director for the DOE Office of Nuclear Energy Integrated Energy Systems program and she currently chairs the Generation IV International Forum Task Force on Non-electric Applications of Nuclear Heat. Dr. Bragg-Sitton holds an MS and PhD in Nuclear Engineering from the University of Michigan, an MS in Medical Physics from the University of Texas at Houston, and a BS in Nuclear Engineering from Texas A&M University. She is a Fellow of the American Nuclear Society and a Founding Member of both the International Youth Nuclear Congress and the North American Young Generation in Nuclear.



EDWARD TYGARD

President at Wishgard

Tygard is President & Managing Partner of Wishgard LLC, the developer of The AEIS Appalachian Storage Hub and Trading Post. Having energy sector experience dating back to 1988, he has been on the forefront of many industry initiatives. With global involvement upstream, midstream and downstream he is now focused on the expansion of energy storage. The AEIS Project is operational and designed to support a wide array of products from Hydrogen, Ammonia, NGL's - including Ethane, as well as CCS. The project is scalable and offers built on demand sites to support from 1 to 100 MMBLs of NGL's, hundreds of GigaWatts of Hydrogen, and millions of Tons of CO₂ per annum. Among project attributes; sites have the required infrastructure of pipe, river, rail and electric already in place. Wishgard's leadership is creating opportunities for advancement through all forms of energy creation, storage and application. Our assets and initiatives provide efficient and profitable solutions to significant industry demands.

Speaker Biographies



DAVID MCCARTHY

Vice President, Green Hydrogen at 174 Power Global

David brings a wealth of experience from his previous roles at Air Products and Chemicals, holds B.S in Chemical Engineering from Drexel University and an MBA from Temple University. With expertise in Hydrogen, energy, chemical engineering, process simulation, and strategic planning, David is at the forefront of hydrogen business development.