

Forum on Energy Systems Transformation and Decarbonization

Committee

Stephen Comello

Chair

Stephen D. Comello is the Executive Vice President at the EFI Foundation and Managing Director of its Energy Futures Finance Forum. In early 2025, he was appointed Executive Director of the Nuclear Scaling Initiative, a collaboration between EFI Foundation, the Clean Air Task Force and the Nuclear Threat Initiative. Previously, he served as a faculty member at the Stanford Graduate School of Business for over a decade, co-leading the Rapid Decarbonization Initiative. With a 23-year career dedicated to scaling emerging energy and environmental technologies, Comello specializes in policy and business model innovations. His expertise spans technoeconomic analysis, policy and project finance, corporate strategy in the energy transition, and open innovation. At Stanford, he held leadership roles in various research initiatives and industrial affiliate programs. He has authored numerous publications in energy policy, industrial organization, development economics, innovation management, and carbon accounting. Stephen holds bachelor's and master's degrees in mechanical and industrial engineering from the University of Toronto and a PhD in civil and environmental engineering from Stanford University. Originally from Canada, he now resides in Washington, D.C.

Maria Martinez

Ex Officio Member

Evan S. Michelson

Ex Officio Member

Evan Michelson is a Program Director at the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. Michelson is responsible for overseeing the Foundation's Energy and Environment program, which seeks to inform the societal transition toward low-carbon energy systems in the United States by investigating economic, environmental, technological, and distributional issues. The Energy and Environment program is unique for its focus on supporting influential, interdisciplinary research, training, networking, and dissemination efforts. He also manages the Foundation's grantmaking to the Sloan Digital Sky Survey, a transformational international astrophysics research collaboration focused on exploring the evolution and structure of the universe, the formation of stars and galaxies, the history of the Milky Way, and the science behind black holes and dark matter.

Billy B. Bardin

Member

Billy B. Bardin is the Global Climate Transition Director for Dow. He is accountable for the development of Dow's strategy to transition to a carbon-neutral future and engages with Dow's businesses, customers, and external stakeholders on efforts to reduce carbon emissions with a focus on value generation. Bardin leads the Dow Climate Program Management Office and the executive Climate Steering Team. He has had leadership roles in Research and Development, Operations, and Manufacturing and Engineering in which he led efforts to develop and commercialize technologies. Prior to his current role, Bardin most recently held leadership roles as the global digitalization director, global operations technology and manufacturing 4.0 director, and R&D director for Feedstocks, Hydrocarbons, Energy, Chemicals & Licensing. Bardin holds a B.S. degree in chemical engineering from North Carolina State University, and a M.S. degree and a Ph.D. in chemical engineering from the University of Virginia. He is a Registered Professional Engineer (PE) with the West Virginia State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers. Bardin was the 2023 President of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) and is a Fellow of the Institute. Bardin is an executive member and past Chair of the Industrial Advisory Board for the School of Chemical Engineering at Purdue University and a member of the advisory boards for the Departments of Chemical Engineering at the University of Virginia and North Carolina State University. Bardin was the founding chair of the RAPID advanced manufacturing institute. He is currently chair of the board of directors for the MxD advanced manufacturing institute.

Latonia Viverette Batiste

Member

Latonia Batiste is an Environmental Scientist with nearly 30 years of experience in energy, sustainability, and regulatory sectors. Most recently, she served as the Assistant Vice President in the Sustainability, Energy, and Climate Change sector at WSP, USA, and as the Interim Development Director of the start-up nonprofit Growing Green Project. She is the 2016 Founding Director of Sustainability and Energy Efficiency at Xavier University of Louisiana. As a social entrepreneur, she is the Founding Principal Environmental Scientist of Ivy Environmental Consulting. Currently, she co-designs carbon reduction strategies and programs for Fortune 50-500 companies and manages teams through high-profile energy infrastructure and climate finance mergers and acquisitions. She holds a Ph.D. in Higher Education (Environmental Sustainability) from Jackson State University, an M.S. in public health degree in environmental science from Tulane University, and a B.S. degree in biology from Xavier University of Louisiana. She enjoys developing climate literacy tools for the youth, leading youth climate justice workshops, mentoring BIPOC communities, and serving in leadership roles with the Gulf Research Program of The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine as the Committee Chairperson of the Gulf Scholars Program.

Britta K. Gross

Member

Britta Gross leads the Electric Power Research Institute's (EPRI) transportation program and the EVs2Scale2030 initiative and is responsible for defining the market strategies needed to accelerate electrification of the transportation system, with an urgent focus on identifying the critical gaps that need to be addressed to achieve widespread electrification, while ensuring a reliable, affordable, and sustainable electric grid. Britta was formerly the Director of Advanced Vehicle Commercialization at General Motors, responsible for the energy and infrastructure strategies required to enable the commercialization of battery and hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles. Britta is also currently a Commissioner, and former President, of the Orlando Utilities Commission. She has an Electrical Engineering degree from LSU and studied language arts at the University of Wurzburg in Germany. She has held numerous board seats, including the Alliance for Transportation Electrification, NACFE, MobilityData, Plug in America, the Electric Drive Transportation Association (EDTA), and served as a Governor appointee on both the Massachusetts and Maryland EV Commissions. Ms. Gross has received numerous industry awards, including the Forth Roadmap Career Achievement Award, Automotive News' "Electrifying 100", the GreenBiz "Verge 25" award, the Stephen R. Connors Visionary Award, and has testified at the Senate Budget Committee and the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on transportation electrification.

Julia H. Haggerty

Member

Julia Haggerty is Professor of Geography and Department Head in the Department of Earth Sciences at Montana State University and University Fellow at Resources for the Future. She previously led the U.S. DOE and EPA -funded Region 8 Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Center. A resource geographer, Haggerty's expertise is in community-engaged, place-based research on rural and Tribal economic and community development and related natural resource and energy policy issues. Her research has been supported by grants from the NSF, US DOE, USDA NIFA, USGS, and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. An active network-builder in the energy social science research community, Haggerty co-led the Energy Impacts research coordination network from 2015-2017 (NSF #1528422), co-leads the Resilient Energy Economies initiative, and holds board positions with the Global Coal Transitions research coordination network (NSF #2215165) and the Health Effects Institute Energy Research Board. Haggerty received the 2020 Fulbright Global Scholar award and the Professional Geographer Award from the Association of American Geographers in 2019. Haggerty's degrees include a BA from Colorado College in Liberal Arts, Ph.D. from the University of Colorado in History, and a certificate in Applied Compassion from Stanford University School of Medicine. Haggerty's previous engagements with the National Academies were as a consensus report author for Accelerating Decarbonization in the United States from 2020-2023 and as an appointed member of the Roundtable on Unconventional Hydrocarbons from 2015-2018.

Clifford Ho

Member

Dr. Cliff Ho is a Senior Manager of Advanced Renewable Energy at SB Energy, where he is helping to develop integrated energy technologies and energy-storage solutions for large data/load centers. Cliff previously worked at Sandia National Laboratories for over 30 years, where he developed technologies and models to address problems in energy, water, and the environment. He is a Fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, Associate Editor of Elsevier's Solar Energy Journal, and a past invited member of the National Academies Transportation Research Board. Dr. Ho has expertise in diverse areas of the energy ecosystem, including nuclear waste management, water resources, sensing and monitoring, industrial process heat, technoeconomic analyses, grid technologies, and innovative solar technologies for electricity, heat, and transportation fuels. From 2022 to 2024, Dr. Ho served as a Legislative Fellow in the Office of U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich and advised on a wide range of energy policies, further enhancing his understanding of the intersection between technology, policy, and industry needs. Dr. Ho authored several bills pertaining to grid reliability, nuclear waste management, permitting, and alternative process heat for industries. Dr. Ho received the Outstanding Professor Award from the University of New Mexico in 1997 and the national Asian American Engineer of the Year Award in 2010. Dr. Ho received R&D 100 Awards in 2013 for the development of the Solar Glare Hazard Analysis Tool and in 2016 for the Falling Particle Receiver for Concentrating Solar Energy. He won Discover magazine's "The Future of Energy in Two-Minutes-or-Less" video contest in 2008. Dr. Ho received his B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Wisconsin Madison in 1989 and his M.S. and Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of California Berkeley in 1990 and 1993.

Francis O'Sullivan

Member

Francis O'Sullivan is a Managing Director at S2G Investments and is a leader of the firm's energy investing activities. Frank is also an adjunct faculty member at the MIT Sloan School and has previously served as the Director of Research for MIT's Energy Initiative and as Co-Director of the MIT Electric Power System Center. Earlier in his career, Frank was a senior consultant at McKinsey & Company. Dr. O'Sullivan is a Senior Associate with the Energy and National Security Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington DC, a Distinguished Associate at the Energy Futures Initiative, and has previously served as a board member of the American Council on Renewable Energy. Frank is a member of the Governing Authority of University College Cork. He received his Ph.D., E.E., and S.M. degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and his B.E. from the University College Cork, all in electrical engineering.

Benjamin Preston

Member

Benjamin Preston is a senior policy researcher at RAND and director of the Center for Climate and Energy Futures. He is also a professor at the RAND School of Public Policy. Preston's recent research efforts include advancing understanding of the implications of climate change and disasters on the delivery of infrastructure services, analyzing and communicating the environmental justice dimensions of climate change, scenario analysis for low-carbon technology pathways, and analysis of disaster recovery options and their implementation in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. From 2021 to 2023 Preston took a leave of absence from RAND to serve as the assistant director for Climate Services and Adaptation in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. Previously, he held research positions with the Climate Change Science Institute at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, the CSIRO's Division of Marine and Atmospheric Research, and the Pew Center on Global Climate Change. He is active with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, including service on the Board on Environmental Change and Society and the Advisory Committee to Climate Crossroads. Preston received a Ph.D. in environmental biology from the Georgia Institute of Technology and a B.S. in biology from the College of William & Mary.

Heather Reams

Member

Heather Reams is a highly respected non-profit executive and a nationally recognized conservative leader of clean energy and climate advocacy. She currently serves as President and Chief Executive Officer of Citizens for Responsible Energy Solutions (CRES) and CRES Forum, leading nonprofit organizations based in Washington, DC, dedicated to conservative solutions to address our nation's energy, economic, and environmental security while increasing America's competitive edge. Under Ms. Reams' visionary leadership, drawing from three decades of experience advancing mission-driven initiatives and shaping public discourse, CRES has helped shift the narrative around clean energy, influencing legislative outcomes in support of carbon reduction strategies, advanced energy technologies, and economic opportunity. Among her most notable achievements are the founding of National Clean Energy Week, an annual convening of industry leaders, policymakers, and stakeholders recognizing the benefits and contributions of clean energy, as well as the founding of the Conservative Climate Foundation, a nonprofit organization that educates Congressional members, their staff and the public about clean energy and climate policy from a conservative angle. Ms. Reams also launched the CRES Clean Energy Champions program, which recognizes influential voices in advancing clean energy policy, and established CRES Academy, educational programming exclusively for Capitol Hill staff and emerging leaders. She is a Western Caucus Foundation advisory board member and serves on the board of directors for the American Conservative Coalition Action. She began her career as a staffer in the offices of U.S. Senator Bob Smith (R-N.H.) and U.S. Congressman Gerald Weller (R-III.), and earlier as an intern for U.S. Senator Slade Gorton (R-Wash.) while pursuing her degree in political science from the University of Washington.

Susan F. Tierney

Member

Dr. Susan Tierney, a Senior Advisor at Analysis Group, is an expert on energy economics, regulation and policy, particularly in the electric and gas industries. She focuses on utility economics and ratemaking, wholesale and retail market analysis and design, technology and market trends, regional transmission organizations, siting electric and gas infrastructure, electric system reliability, gas-electric market integration, decarbonization policy, and other environmental policy and regulation. Previously, she served as the Assistant Secretary for Policy at the U.S. Department of Energy. In Massachusetts, she was the Secretary of Environmental Affairs, Commissioner at the Department of Public Utilities, and Executive Director of the Energy Facilities Siting Council. She chairs the boards of: the National Academies of Sciences, Energy and Medicine's Board on Energy and Environmental Systems; Resources for the Future; and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. She is a director of: the Barr Foundation; the Coalition for Green Capital; the Energy Foundation; and Climate Lead. She has a Ph.D. and Masters degree in regional planning from Cornell University. She is a National Associate of NASEM's National Research Council and her NASEM committee service includes the committees on the Climate Crossroads Initiative, Accelerating Decarbonization of the U.S. Energy System (2020-2022) and on the Future of Electric Power in the U.S. (2021).

Gavin P. Towler

Member

Dr. Gavin Towler retired from Honeywell in August 2025 at which time he was the Corporate Vice President and Chief Scientist, Sustainable Technologies for Honeywell, with technical accountability across Honeywell for driving thought leadership in Sustainable Technologies. Gavin has 30 years of broad experience of process and product design in the chemicals and fuels industries and has 77 US patents. Prior to his current role he served as Vice President and Chief Technology Officer of Honeywell UOP and of Honeywell Performance Materials and Technologies. He is co-author of "Chemical Engineering Design", a textbook on process design, and is an Adjunct Professor at Northwestern University and the National University of Singapore, where he helps teach the senior design classes. Dr. Towler has a bachelor's and master's degree in chemical engineering from Cambridge University and a doctorate from U.C. Berkeley. He is a Chartered Engineer and Fellow of the Institute of Chemical Engineers and is a Fellow of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers and a member of the National Academy of Engineering.

Denise Gray

Member

Denise is currently a Corporate Board of Director, Board Member, and Industry Advisor. Her most recent positions were Head of External Affairs / Government Relations and President LG Energy Solution Michigan, Inc. Tech Center, a U.S subsidiary of LG Energy Solution. Her responsibilities included: development and industrialization of battery solutions for automotive applications, company board governance, business development, and customer and government strategic relations. Prior to her LG positions, Denise held automotive leadership positions with AVL List GmbH in Austria and Atieva (now Lucid Motors) in California. The vast majority of her professional career (30 years) was with General Motors, where she spearheaded efforts in vehicle electrical and propulsion systems embedded controls and software, including battery systems. Denise holds a Bachelor of Science in electrical engineering from Kettering University and a Master of Science in environmental science from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Denise is a member of the National Academy of Engineering. Denise's Board of Director memberships: Canadian National Railway, Cheniere Energy Inc., and Mitra Chem Inc.; Advisory roles: Liminal Insights, Qnovo, and Electrification Academy.

Abigail Regitsky

Ex Officio Member