

MID-GRID 2035 Symposium

Speaker Biographies September 29-30, 2026 | Chicago, IL

David Springe, National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates

David Springe is the Executive Director of the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates (NASUCA). NASUCA's 63 member offices represent the interests of utility consumers in 45 states, the District of Columbia, Barbados, Puerto Rico, and Jamaica.

Prior to assuming his duties at NASUCA, Mr. Springe served for thirteen years as Consumer Counsel for the Kansas Citizens' Utility Ratepayer Board (CURB) and spent nine years as an economist and expert witness for both CURB and the Kansas Corporation Commission. Mr. Springe received his M.A. in Economics and Juris Doctor from the University of Kansas. Mr. Springe served as President of NASUCA from 2007-2009 and continues to represent consumer interests on numerous advisory boards, task forces and working groups.



Mark Tiemeier, Midwest Reliability Organization

Mark Tiemeier is the Director of Power System Risk Management at Midwest Reliability Organization (MRO), where he leads efforts to identify, assess, and address risks to the reliable and secure operation of the bulk power system across the MRO region. In this role, Mark directs MRO's risk management program, which includes the development of MRO's annual Regional Risk Assessment (RRA), prioritizing key risks to reliability and security, and strategies designed to address the most significant emerging and ongoing challenges facing the electric grid. Mark also leads the data analytics group at MRO which supports the entire organization's needs to develop actionable insights from data on power system performance, reliability, security, and compliance.



Mark facilitated discussions with a broad range of industry stakeholders on the enhanced use of relay protection and control systems to lessen wildfire risk as part of NERC's Wildfire Workshops in Salt Lake City in January 2026 and Calgary, Alberta in April 2026. He also contributed to NERC's report Reducing the Risk of Wildfire Ignition by the Bulk Power System, released in May 2026.

During his nearly two decades long career, Mark has held engineering, supervisory, and leadership roles with expertise spanning dynamic stability analysis, system event evaluation, power system restoration, transmission operations, and operational strategy. He supervised real-time transmission system operations in the Upper Midwest and led key initiatives involving Energy Management System performance metrics, standardized operating procedures, and major system transitions. Mark holds a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Iowa State University and an MBA from University of St. Thomas, and is a registered Professional Engineer in Minnesota.

Chris Villarreal, Pano AI

Chris Villarreal is the Regulatory Affairs Director for Pano AI. In this role, he leads Pano's engagement with state regulators on topics including wildfire technology, costs and benefits, and development of wildfire mitigation plans. Prior to joining Pano, he was an independent consultant advising state commissions, consumer advocates, and non-profits around the country on rate design, electric distribution system planning, distributed energy resources, and customer and grid data access. He was also an associate resident scholar with the R Street Institute. Before that, he worked for the California PUC and the Minnesota PUC. All told, Chris has over 25 years experience working on state and federal energy activities.



Sarah Freeman, Regulatory Assistance Project

Sarah Freeman brings more than two decades of legal and regulatory experience to her role as Principal with the Regulatory Assistance Project. Sarah joined RAP in 2025 following nine years of service at the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission, where she regulated electric, gas, water and wastewater utilities.

As Commissioner, Sarah held leadership roles with the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), and the Organization of MISO States. She expanded educational and engagement opportunities for commissioners, commission staff and external stakeholders at state, regional and federal levels. She served on various boards and advisory councils with organizations that advance education and energy thought leadership, including the Mid-America Regulatory Conference, the National Council on Electricity Policy, Electric Power Research Institute, and Financial Research Institute of the University of Missouri. She also served on the board of directors for the Universal Service Administrative Company advancing universal broadband access.



Sarah holds multiple degrees from Indiana University – Bloomington, where she was a member of the inaugural class of Herman B Wells Scholars. Her degrees include bachelor's degrees in French, psychology and political science from Indiana University and a juris doctorate from the Maurer School of Law at Indiana University.

Maria Redmond, Wisconsin Office of Sustainability and Clean Energy

Maria Redmond serves as the Director of the Wisconsin Office of Sustainability and Clean Energy and has worked for the State of Wisconsin for 25 years. She plans and administers policies and programs focused on addressing climate change, advancing environmental justice, creating a pathway to multi-sector deep decarbonization, and building a bustling clean energy economy that supports a diverse workforce and technology innovation.



Pete Wyckoff, Evergreen Action

Pete Wyckoff, PhD is Vice President for Policy at Evergreen Action. Prior to joining Evergreen, Pete was Deputy Commissioner for Energy at the Minnesota Department of Commerce, where he ran both the Minnesota State Energy Office and the Regulatory Affairs Unit. From 2018-2022, he served Minnesota Senator Tina Smith as Senior Policy Advisor for Energy and Climate. With Senator Smith, Pete helped develop federal clean energy standard legislation and was a leader on several programs in the Inflation Reduction Act. Before that, he completed fellowship years at the U.S. Department of Energy and in the Office of Senator Al Franken. Pete was initially an academic scientist, and is an emeritus full professor of the University of Minnesota.



Nick Wagner, Black Hills Energy

Nick Wagner currently serves as VP, Regulatory for Black Hills Energy and has been with the company since 2020. In this role Wagner provides strategic leadership for regulatory and policy matters and manages the regulatory and government affairs teams for BHE.

Wagner served 7 1/2 years as a board member of the Iowa Utilities Board, now the Iowa Utilities Commission, which is responsible for regulation of the rates and services of electric, natural gas, and water utilities, the services of communications utilities, and generally supervises all pipelines and the transmission, sale, and distribution of electrical current. As a commissioner Wagner served in many different roles outside of the Commission duties including, serving a one year term as President of NARUC. Wagner served on the Committee on Gas, Washington Action Program, Committee on Critical Infrastructure, NARUC board and executive Committee, Treasurer for Smart Grid Interoperability Panel 2.0 (SGIP) and as a board member, Mid-America Regulatory Conference (MARC) - served as president, vice-president, treasurer and secretary, Treasurer of the National Council on Electricity Policy (NCEP), member of the Executive Committee, Critical Consumer Issues Forum (CCIF), and was a member of the New Mexico State University Center for Public Utilities advisory committee.



Prior to the IUB, Wagner spent over 15 years in industrial controls and automation in roles from Controls Engineer to Director of Quality Management. These roles included professional and management experience in project execution, facility energy and efficiency audits, and building control, programming, team management, project management, strategic planning, process improvement, quality management, continuous improvement and more.

Wagner also served a 4 year term as a Marion City Council member and 2 terms (4 years) in the Iowa House of Representatives, where he served as ranking member and chair of the Local Government Committee and as vice chair of the Appropriations Committee. Also served on the Administration and Regulation Budget Sub Committee and the Commerce, Transportation, and Ways and Means Committees.

Carrie Zalewski, Constellation

Carrie Zalewski serves as Senior Vice President of Regulatory and Governmental Affairs for the Eastern Region at Constellation, the nation's largest producer of carbon-free energy. In this role, she leads federal and state regulatory, legislative, and public policy strategy supporting Constellation's generation fleet and retail operations across 30 states. She works closely with policymakers, regulators, and regional market operators to advance policies that support grid reliability, resource adequacy, competitive electricity markets, and affordability. Prior to joining Constellation, Zalewski served as Vice President of Markets and Transmission at the American Clean Power Association, where she led national strategy on wholesale market design, transmission policy, and reliability issues affecting the clean energy sector. Earlier, she served as Chair of the Illinois Commerce Commission, guiding the state's utility regulatory agency through major clean energy implementation efforts, affordability challenges, and PJM and MISO market stresses. She also serves as an adjunct professor teaching Clean Energy Law at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law.



Braxton Duncan, Converge Strategies

Braxton Duncan leverages her years of developing and executing emergency management plans for the United States Army to support stakeholders in strengthening their energy security and resilience posture.

She guides utility company personnel, private sector organizations, and military installation energy stakeholders through tabletop exercises and workshops centered on energy, cybersecurity, and water/wastewater system disruptions. Through these engagements, she helps identify gaps in emergency management and incident response plans and co-creates project concepts to address those gaps. When supporting clients in the development and implementation of their emergency management plans, she draws on her experience in building collaborative partnerships and training personnel across organizations.



Braxton also has significant experience researching and analyzing supply and demand-side impacts to the critical materials necessary for the clean energy transformation. Through this work, she helped clients strengthen their cross-organizational partnerships and navigate complex financial and political environments.

Braxton is keen on leveraging green infrastructure to support the energy system. She has conducted research into using green infrastructure practices that promote community building, energy efficiency, and resilience in urban environments.

Stephen Bennett, PJM

Stephen Bennett, Sr. Manager, Regulatory/Legislative Affairs, is the PJM liaison for Illinois, Ohio and Pennsylvania. In this role, he interacts with state utility commissions, executive agencies and legislators on energy policy in the areas of RTO grid reliability, transmission planning, operations and wholesale Markets.

Prior to joining PJM, Bennett was the Managing Director at Energy Advocacy, LLC, a boutique consultancy focused on regulatory policy in the retail and wholesale energy markets. Bennett also held management roles in government affairs for both PPL EnergyPlus and Exelon. Bennett has a Bachelor of Science in engineering from the University of Maryland, College Park



Kim O'Guinn, SPP

Kimberly O'Guinn is Senior Director of State Regulatory Policy at Southwest Power Pool (SPP), where she leads regulatory policy development and engagement with state utility commissions across SPP's multistate footprint. Her team focuses on complex regional energy matters, including transmission cost allocation, resource adequacy, financial transmission rights, competitive transmission owner selection process and Western market development.



Before joining SPP in January 2023, Kimberly served for six years as a commissioner on the Arkansas Public Service Commission following her appointment by Governor Asa Hutchinson in November 2016. She oversaw the regulation of Arkansas public utilities and represented the state in regional energy matters through SPP's Regional State Committee, the Organization of MISO States, and the Entergy Regional State Committee. Kimberly has held numerous national and regional leadership positions within the energy sector. She served on several committees of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners and mentored women regulators through NARUC's Advancing Women Leaders in Energy initiative. She has also served on the Financial Research Institute Advisory Board, the New Mexico State University Center for Public Utilities Advisory Council, and the Electric Power Research Institute Advisory Council. She currently serves on the National Utilities Diversity Council and previously served as its co-chair.

Earlier in her career, Kimberly served as Director of Communications and as an environmental engineer with the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality. In those roles, she combined technical expertise, regulatory oversight, and strategic communications to address complex environmental policy and compliance matters. A native of Arkansas, Kimberly serves as President of the Women's Foundation of Arkansas and is committed to advancing opportunities for women. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Engineering from the University of Oklahoma, where she was designated a NASA Fellow through her work with the NASA Space Grant Consortium and NASA EPSCoR.

Brian Tulloh, MISO

Brian Tulloh is executive director of External Affairs for Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO). Tulloh is MISO's primary liaison with members, stakeholders and policymakers in MISO's north footprint in the upper Midwest. Overall, MISO ensures reliable operation of, and equal access to, high-voltage power lines in 15 U.S. states and the Canadian province of Manitoba. MISO also manages one of the world's largest energy markets, with over \$30 billion in gross annual market charges. Tulloh has 35 years of leadership experience across the energy industry. Most recently, he served as vice president of public policy for Dallas-based Energy Future Holdings Corp., where he was responsible for shaping and advancing the organization's public and external affairs strategy. Previously, Tulloh spent a decade at TXU Energy, serving in executive roles including public affairs, business strategy, corporate affairs, and retail strategy and analysis.



Prior to joining TXU, Tulloh was a leader within McKinsey and Company's energy practice, where he served a variety of U.S. and European clients consulting on strategy and organizational issues. Tulloh also held a series of positions within the ARCO family of companies in Texas and California, including oil and gas operations, environmental services, and natural gas trading.

Tulloh is on the board of the Northern Star Council of the Boy Scouts of America in Minnesota and has served in the past on the board of the North Texas Commission, the Texas Association of Businesses, the Center for Commercialization of Electric Technologies (CCET) in Austin, Texas and a UT-Dallas Advisory Board for the Energy Management Program.

Tulloh earned a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from Purdue University and is a registered professional engineer in Texas. He holds an MBA from Southern Methodist University.

Benjamin Stafford, Great Plains Institute (GPI)

Benjamin Stafford joined the Great Plains Institute in 2024 as senior policy manager for the Energy Systems program. Benjamin leads work on utility regulatory innovation and transmission deployment. Benjamin brings over 20 years of experience in the energy industry to GPI. Most recently, he provided strategy consulting to address regulatory and business model challenges to a clean energy transition. Benjamin's past clients include investor-owned electric and gas utilities, environmental interest groups, and federal and state agencies. Benjamin also has worked extensively in government affairs, advocating for legislative and regulatory policy changes. Benjamin also brings experience in state regulation of public utilities. Benjamin is a graduate of Ohio State University with a BA in business administration, a Master of labor and human resources, and a MA in public policy and management, and a MSc in business research from the University of Minnesota Carlson School of Management.



Fairman Campbell, ITC Midwest

Fairman Campbell has worked in Transmission Planning at ITC Midwest since 2010, starting his career in the early years shortly after the company was formed. In his time in Planning, he has fulfilled a variety of roles with increasing levels of responsibility, ranging from: 34.5 kV to 69 kV voltage conversion studies and project creation, which was a major multi-year project of the highest priority when ITC Midwest took over the regional transmission system, to model building, load interconnection studies and project creation, and NERC compliance, to LRTP Tranche 2.1 portfolio development and project implementation.

Fairman is currently leading the ITC Midwest Planning effort in the development of MISO LRTP Tranche 2.1 projects in Minnesota, which is called PowerOn Midwest. PowerOn Midwest is a joint venture between Great River Energy, ITC Midwest and XCEL Energy to build a series of 765 kV and 345 kV line segments across southern Minnesota. This large-scale project is introducing 765 kV technology to the Upper Midwest. Since November 2025, the PowerOn Midwest team has hosted four rounds of open houses in Minnesota presenting the need for the project and taking feedback from landowners, community leaders, local government officials and other stakeholders. The Certificate of Need was submitted to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC) in February 2026, and the team is developing the submittal for the Route Permit Application to the MPUC, which is anticipated in February 2027. The projects have scheduled in-service date of 2034.



Fairman earned his Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Iowa State University in 2009. He holds a Professional Engineering License in the states of Iowa and Minnesota. Fairman and his family live in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where he works at ITC Midwest headquarters.

Kenneth Collison, ICF International

Ken Collison is a Vice President at ICF International with more than 25 years' experience in power system and electricity market analysis. Ken assists clients in power system reliability and economic studies, generation interconnection and integration studies, integrated resource and resiliency planning, and technical and financial due diligence. He also serves as an expert witness on electric transmission and distribution issues. Ken is currently leading ICF's team providing transmission planning support to the Department of Energy. In the Midwest, he has supported market participants in conducting transmission needs assessments and evaluating the potential and actual benefits of transmission infrastructure investments. His recent work in MISO and SPP include production cost and power flow studies to identify transmission infrastructure improvements required to integrate new generation resources, improve system reliability and meet state policy goals; a study to quantify the actual production cost, reliability and economic development benefits of a market participant's historical transmission infrastructure investments; and a production cost study to evaluate the benefits of network upgrades identified through the MISO and SPP generation interconnection processes.



Steve Purdy, Southwest Power Pool (SPP)

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering (BSEE), University of Arkansas
1989

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Technical Director, Engineering Policy | Southwest Power Pool | 2024-Current
- Principal Engineer, Grid Asset Utilization | Southwest Power Pool | 2019-2024
- Manager, Generator Interconnections | Southwest Power Pool | 2016-2019
- Manager, Transmission Service Studies | Southwest Power Pool | 2010-2016
- Lead Engineer, Independent Coordinator of Transmission | Southwest Power Pool | 2006-2010
- Planning Engineer | Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corporation | 1989 – 2006



UTILITY EXPERIENCE

- Over 35 years' experience in transmission and distribution planning, system protection, transmission service, and generation interconnection studies.
- Facilitated the development of new cluster study process for SPP's transmission service requests and multiple improvements in SPP's generator study process, as well as providing technical guidance on tariff and regulatory policy for SPP.
- Registered Professional Engineer in Arkansas #8399
- Member Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE)

Diana Gastelum, GPI

Diana Gastelum is a Policy Specialist at the Great Plains Institute, where she focuses on regional transmission planning, wholesale electricity markets, and stakeholder engagement across the SPP and MISO regions. Her work centers on navigating complex regional energy issues, with particular interests in transmission development, affordability, and RTO governance.

Prior to joining GPI, Diana worked as a Senior Program Coordinator for an energy consulting firm in California, supporting energy efficiency programs serving disadvantaged communities. Her work included program performance and metric reporting, energy efficiency claims processing, and market transformation initiatives.

Diana graduated from Suffolk University in Boston, Massachusetts, with a bachelor's in environmental policy and a background in International Relations. She is also an alumna of the Women in Energy Fellowship at Columbia University's Center on Global Energy Policy.

