

Western Massachusetts Solar Forum

Session 1: Solar in Massachusetts – Past, Present, and Future

Speaker Bios

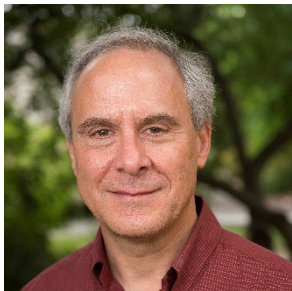


Anna Balzer

Solar Community Engagement Coordinator

Boston Government Services | U.S. Department of Energy | SETO EERE

Anna Balzer joined the Solar Energy Technologies Office in June 2021 as the Solar Community Engagement Coordinator for the National Community Solar Partnership. In this role, she provides technical support for stakeholder engagement and communications to grow the reach and impact of the program. Anna is an AmeriCorps Alumni with roots in community engagement, education, and youth leadership development. Prior to joining DOE, she served in and managed the Youth Energy Squad, an AmeriCorps program in Detroit, Michigan, that engages young people in place-based education and leadership on energy burden reduction in their communities. Anna holds a master's in public affairs from the University of Michigan and a bachelor's in environmental studies from the University of Colorado Boulder.



Dwayne Breger

Director

UMass Clean Energy Extension

Dwayne Breger is an Extension Professor in Environmental Conservation and Director of the Clean Energy Extension. The Clean Energy Extension (CEE) is part of the broad Extension programs central to UMass' mission and supports state goals to accelerate clean energy markets in Massachusetts through market outreach, technical assistance, workforce training, and applied research. Prior to coming to UMass in 2015, Dwayne spent 13 years as the Director of Renewable Energy for the MA Department of Energy Resources. Currently, he serves on the Energy and Climate Action Committee and chairs the Solar Bylaw Working Group for the town of Amherst.



Elizabeth Mahony

Commissioner of the Department of Energy Resources

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Elizabeth Mahony most recently worked for Attorneys General Andrea Joy Campbell and Maura Healey as an Assistant Attorney General and Senior Policy Advisor for Energy. Elizabeth served in the Energy and Telecommunications Division, focusing on utility clean energy procurements, solar program

development, clean energy rate design, consumer protections, and legislative engagement. Before joining the Attorney General's Office, Elizabeth was Acting General Counsel for the Department of Energy Resources and Committee Counsel to Benjamin Downing, Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy before that. Elizabeth is a graduate of Marist College and Suffolk University Law School.



Juan Botero

Strategic Analyst

Boston Government Services | U.S. Department of Energy | SETO EERE

Juan Botero is a Strategic Analyst in the Solar Energy Technologies Office (SETO) supporting the Strategic Analysis and Institutional Support (SAIS) team. Juan's work contributes to the team's mission of reducing solar soft costs by supporting research at the intersection of natural resource conservation and solar energy deployment. He contributes to projects focused on solar siting issues, interactions between solar energy facilities and wildlife, land use concerns, among other topics. In his previous role, Juan worked with the American Wind Wildlife Institute where he managed a research fund focused on creating solutions to deploy more wind energy across the country while minimizing its impacts on wildlife and the environment. Juan is a fellow at the Clean Energy Leadership Institute where he engages regularly with leaders from across the clean energy field on emerging topics in the space and professional development. Juan holds an M.S. from William & Mary University where he studied the impacts of mercury on songbirds and a B.S. from Virginia Tech with a major in wildlife science.



Katherine Antos

EEA Undersecretary of Decarbonization & Resilience

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Katherine Antos is the Undersecretary for Decarbonization and Resilience at Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. She leads efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve Net Zero by 2050, equip people, environment and infrastructure to adapt to climate change, and ensure meaningful involvement and access to benefits of the clean energy transition for Environmental Justice communities. Ms. Antos previously served as the Deputy Executive Director for Planning & Sustainability at the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), where she oversaw plans, technical assistance and initiatives to advance a more resilient Greater Boston region. She received regional and national awards for her innovative ecosystem restoration efforts at Washington, DC's Department of Energy and Environment and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Chesapeake Bay Program Office.



Kathleen Doyle

Board of Directors

SEBANE

Kathleen C. Doyle founded FireFlower Alternative Energy in 2008 with a goal of helping companies leverage the federal and state incentives available for renewable energy development. Ms. Doyle has expertise in Solar, Wind and Biofuel development. With over 7MW of renewable energy developed or under construction, including a 998-kW project in Hyde Park, MA and a 784 kW project in Reading, MA at the Amazon facility, Ms. Doyle and FireFlower Alternative Energy have demonstrated the ability to deliver projects on time and on budget. More importantly, Ms. Doyle lends a level of sophistication to the complex financials associated with these transactions that savvy developers and site owners require. For 20 years prior to founding FireFlower Alternative Energy, Ms. Doyle co-founded and co-managed GVA Thompson Doyle, Ms. Doyle. She combines expertise in permitting, siting, and structuring complex real estate transactions with sourcing the financial resources which are key to every successful energy project. Although started at the depth of the last real estate recession, her commercial real estate company grew to be recognized as the largest woman-owned commercial real estate firm in MA. Currently, Ms. Doyle also owns The First Taunton Group, a real estate investment, development and management company based in Taunton, MA. An active entrepreneur with a passion for sustainable living, Ms. Doyle notes that her family's transportation was at one time fueled by 100% biodiesel from waste vegetable oil. A PV system currently powers almost all of the total electric demand at her home. Ms. Doyle is a member of the Board of Directors for Solar Energy Businesses of New England (SEBANE), and the Taunton Business Improvement District (BID), a past member of the Board of Directors for Sustainable Milton, a former mentor for nine startup companies, and has been an active member of Entrepreneurs' Organization for the past 24 years.



Melissa Hoffer

Climate Chief

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Melissa Hoffer is Massachusetts' first ever Climate Chief. She joined the Biden Administration as a Day 1 political appointee, serving as the Acting General Counsel and Principal Deputy General Counsel of the Environmental Protection Agency. She led the EPA's Office of General Counsel through the transition until November 2021, and continued to serve as Principal Deputy General Counsel.



Nicole Steele

Senior Advisor, Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Workforce and Equitable Access Lead, Solar Energy Technologies Office, U.S. Department of Energy

Nicole Steele is a nationally recognized leader and expert in clean energy with a focus on frontline communities and workforce development. She has 20 years of experience working with government officials, policymakers, advocates, and entrepreneurs to develop and implement inclusive clean energy policies and programs.



Rebecca Tepper

**Secretary of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

Rebecca Tepper joined the Office of Attorney General Maura Healey, first serving as Deputy Chief of EEB and Chief of AG Healey's Energy and Telecommunications Division before being appointed Chief of the Energy and Environment Bureau. During her time at the AG's office, she advised on energy policy and served as the state's ratepayer advocate before regulators and courts. Prior to joining the AG's Office, Tepper was General Counsel to the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU), serving as the chief legal advisor and overseeing all DPU adjudicatory and rulemaking proceedings. Tepper also served as Director of the Massachusetts Energy Facilities Siting Board and represented the state on the Eastern Interconnection States' Planning Council.