

Energy Storage for Social Equity

ROUNDTABLE

June 28 - 29, 2021

10 am - 1 pm PST



State Government Panel Biographies

Hear from representatives in state governments administering energy equity programs. Speakers will discuss the current procedural, structural, and regulatory environment and will establish program development goals around energy equity.

Moderator: Rebecca O'Neil, Advisor, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory

Participants:

- **Crystal Pruitt**, Deputy Director of the Office of Clean Energy Equity, New Jersey Board of Public Utilities
- **Sarah Vorpahl**, Senior Energy Policy Specialist, Washington State Energy Office
- **Joy Wang**, Public Utilities Engineer, Michigan Public Service Commission

Crystal Pruitt is the Deputy Director for Clean Energy Equity at the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities. In this role, she works to ensure that New Jersey's clean energy future is accessible to all residents, including New Jersey's low- and moderate-income (LMI) communities. Since January 2019, Ms. Pruitt has served as a Councilwoman at Large in Franklin Township. Crystal Pruitt has had a strong commitment to social justice, behavioral health, and criminal justice which has informed her volunteer and professional pursuits. Prior to her NJBPU appointment, Ms. Pruitt was Chief of Staff for NJ State Assemblyman Andrew Zwicker. Before coming to New Jersey she worked for organizations focused on behavioral health and disability services. Crystal Pruitt received two Masters' degrees from John Jay College of Criminal Justice in Forensic Psychology and Forensic Mental Health Counseling and holds a bachelor's degree in Criminology from North Carolina State University.

Sarah Vorpahl is a Senior Energy Policy Specialist at the Washington State Energy Office, where she focuses on distributed energy resources. She is currently working to implement Washington's new clean energy mandate, the Clean Energy Transformation Act, and is serving as the lead on equity and low income issues. Sarah graduated with her Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of Washington, where she studied emerging solar cell materials in the lab of Professor David Ginger. Her doctoral work also included a Ph.D. Concentration in Public Policy and Management from the Evans School at UW. After her doctorate, Sarah served as the 2017-

18 OSA/MRS Science and Engineering Congressional Fellow in the office of Senator Bernie Sanders where she worked on a broad portfolio of climate and energy policy.

Dr. Joy Wang is a Public Utilities Engineer at Michigan Public Service Commission supporting safe, reliable, and accessible energy services at reasonable rates. Dr. Joy Wang received her doctorate in Public Policy focusing on Energy and Environmental Policy from Georgia Institute of Technology. She holds both a master's and a bachelor's degree from Michigan State University in Biosystems Engineering.

Ms. Rebecca O'Neil is an advisor for Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. In her career at the Laboratory, she has served as the lab relationship manager for the US DOE EERE Renewable Energy portfolio, served a rotation into the U.S. Department of Energy's Water Power Technologies Office to develop a hydropower-grid research program, and led the regulatory area for energy storage. She is currently leading the policy and valuation track for the US DOE's Energy Storage Grand Challenge, and has been featured among national laboratory women staff on energy storage accomplishments. Her research interests relate to energy justice, energy storage, community-scale innovation, sustainable hydropower and marine energy development. She joined PNNL in 2015 from the Oregon Department of Energy, where she represented the agency on water power development, oversaw the state renewable portfolio standard, and ran a multi-million-dollar portfolio of federal grants ranging from renewable energy feasibility studies, agricultural efficiency measures, energy assurance, and woodstove replacement programs. Before her state service, she managed the multifamily energy efficiency program for the Energy Trust of Oregon, administering incentives to drive upgrades in multifamily dwellings. For years, Rebecca represented a coalition of river conservation and recreation organizations in federal hydropower dam licensing, becoming a recognized and published expert in the regulatory process and the relationship between hydropower operations and environmental effects. She serves on multiple organizational boards and advisory groups related to renewable energy. Unrelated to energy, Rebecca has served as an AmeriCorps-VISTA teaching childhood literacy in rural Kentucky. As a Wagoner Scholar, she conducted Honors work in Cape Town, South Africa, producing a thesis on the role of literacy in manumission. She is a civilian advisory graduate of the National Security Seminar at the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. She earned a B.A. from Rice University in Houston.