

December 13, 2013 Roundtable Speakers' Bios

Nick Chaset

Nick currently serves as Governor Jerry Brown's Special Advisor for Distributed Energy Resources. In this role, Nick is focused on the development and implementation of Distributed Generation, CHP and Energy Storage Policy. During Nick's tenure with the Brown Administration, Nick has worked closely with State regulatory agencies to develop rooftop solar energy regulations, energy storage procurement mandates and has overseen the implementation of the CPUCs CHP settlement and the application of cap and trade rules to facilities with CHP.

Nick previously served as the director of new market development and government affairs of Q-Cells NA, where he was responsible for leading Q-Cells' strategic marketing efforts, as well as representing Q-Cells with local, state and federal government agencies. He received his BA in international relations at Tufts University and his MBA from Georgetown University.

Commissioner Mark Sylvia

Mark Sylvia was appointed Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources in 2011, having served previously as the first Director of DOER's Green Communities Division. Sylvia was the Plymouth Town Manager prior to joining DOER. He represents Massachusetts on the Boards of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Inc.; National Association of State Energy Officials, Northeast Region; and Massachusetts Clean Energy Center.

Commissioner Sylvia and his team are implementing nation leading energy policies and programs that are delivering economic and environmental benefits for Massachusetts families and businesses. 110 cities and towns, representing nearly 45% of the state's population, have been designated as Green Communities. Solar installations have surpassed the Governor's 2017 goal four years early, with 361 megawatts installed in nearly every municipality. And the investments and results in energy efficiency have earned Massachusetts the distinction of being the #1 state for energy efficiency for the last three years, according to the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy.

Sylvia earned his B.A. and M.P.A. from The American University and lives with his family in Fairhaven.

Senator Ben Downing

Benjamin B. Downing (D-Pittsfield) was first elected to the Massachusetts Senate on Nov. 7, 2006 and was re-elected in 2008, 2010 and 2012. Senator Downing represents the 52 communities of the Berkshire, Hampshire, Franklin & Hampden District, proudly serving the largest Senate district in the Commonwealth.

Senator Downing serves as the Senate chairman of the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy, which is tasked with reviewing all matters concerning renewable and non-renewable energy sources. He is also the chairman of the Senate Committee on Bills in Third Reading, which reviews all bills on the Senate calendar to ensure they are constitutional and free from drafting errors before they are considered for engrossment.

The Senator also serves as vice-chairman of the Joint Committee on Tourism, Arts and Cultural Development. In past legislative sessions he served as chair of the Public Service Committee (2007), the Senate Ethics and Rules Committee (2007-2008), the Revenue Committee (2009-2010), the Higher Education Committee (2010) and the Senate Committee on Steering and Policy (2012).

He is an active member of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, and serves on several other Senate and Joint Committees. Senator Downing also serves as co-chairman of the Gateway Cities Caucus, co-chairman of the Regional Transit Authorities (RTA) Caucus, and is an active participant of the Regional Schools Caucus.

A Pittsfield native, Senator Downing received his B.A. in Political Science from Providence College in 2003. In May 2008 he received a M.A. from Tufts University's Department of Urban and Environment Policy and Planning. He is a graduate of the Pittsfield Catholic Schools.

Before returning to Pittsfield, Senator Downing lived in Washington, D.C. working for former Congressman William Delahunt (D- Quincy) and Congressman Richard E. Neal (D- Springfield), before joining the staff of former Congressman John W. Olver (D- Amherst). For nearly two years he served as senior advisor to Congressman Olver.

Senator Downing's family has a long history of public service. He is the oldest of four children (Maggie, Nate and Nick) raised by the late Berkshire District Attorney Gerard and Pamela Downing. He is married to Micaelah B. Morrill.

Ron Gerwatowski

Ronald T. Gerwatowski is the Senior Vice President for Regulation & Pricing at National Grid. Ron has responsibility for rates and regulatory policy for all the regulated businesses of National Grid in the U.S., including regulated utilities in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New York. Ron is a magna cum laude graduate of Boston College Law School and has worked in the utility industry in both legal and non-legal capacities for National Grid and its predecessor companies in the U.S. for 27 years. National Grid has been a leader in the industry and supported the development of renewable resources in the region. For many years Ron has been heavily involved in the development of renewable energy policy in New England, and participated in the legislative processes leading to the passage of the Green Communities Act of Massachusetts, and renewable energy legislation in Rhode Island.

Carrie Cullen Hitt

Carrie Cullen Hitt serves as Senior Vice President, State Affairs for SEIA and was previously President of the Solar Alliance, which merged with SEIA on January 1st of 2012. Prior to joining the Solar Alliance, Carrie served as Vice President, Renewable Products for Constellation Energy. In this role, she developed programs and capabilities to help customers manage their business' impact on the environment through greenhouse gas reducing activities, including purchasing renewable power.

She also served as Vice President of Government and Regulatory Affairs from 2002-2007. From 1999-2001, she worked at Green Mountain Energy Resources as Director of Regional Business Development. She has also held energy related positions at the Massachusetts Legislature and Harvard University.

Carrie holds an undergraduate degree from Clark University and an MA from the School of Advanced International Studies of Johns Hopkins University. She currently serves on the advisory council of the Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) and the North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association (NCSEA).