MACRUC 31st Annual Education Conference

Columbus, Ohio | June 15 – June 18, 2026

DRAFT

Monday, April 6, 2026

MONDAY, JUNE 15

4:00 – 6:30 p.m. | Registration

5:30 – 6:30 p.m. | Capital City Kickoff Welcome Reception Stories on High, 28th Floor of Hilton

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TUESDAY, JUNE 16

7:30 – 4:00 p.m. **Registration**

7:30 – 8:30 a.m. | Midwest Meet Up Breakfast

8:30 – 10:15 a.m. | General Session #1:

Welcome to Columbus

State Solutions for the Capacity Crunch

Welcome and MACRUC Business Meeting: Hon. Dennis Deters, Ohio, MACRUC President

State Solutions for the Capacity Crunch:

Much has been said about what PJM's management should have, would have, and still can do to address the resource adequacy issues of the region—with States often acting as mere commentators or complainants as the drama unfolds. This panel seeks to turn attention back to States themselves and to consider the approaches at their disposal to expand capacity (or mitigate the need for additional capacity) in an affordable, least-regrets manner. Each panelist will propose at least one concrete solution, while having a chance to ask pointed questions of their peers!

Moderator: Hon. Kumar Barve, Maryland

- Mason Emnett, Constellation
- Travis Kavulla, Base Power Company
- Nicole Luckey, Invenergy

10:15 – 10:45 a.m. | Buckeye Coffee Break

10:45 – 11:45 a.m. | Concurrent Sessions A

A1: The IRP Evolution: Balancing Reliability, Growth, and State Goals:

As we navigate the complex issues associated with the transformation of the electric system to meet increasing energy demand, Integrated Resource Planning offers a valuable tool to determine and plan for generation resources needed to both maintain reliable, resilient, and affordable electric service for customers and address other state policy priorities including environmental and economic development goals.

Panelists will discuss the experiences and opportunities associated with Integrated Resources Planning - during both the planning and execution phases - from two perspectives:

(1) Different models for approaching integrated resource planning in vertically integrated states including best practices and what opportunities to improve planning exist in today's environment of rapid load growth; and
(2) How can deregulated states develop integrated resources plans for needed generation and what lessons and planning tools or models from vertically integrated states can be best leveraged while preserving retail competition.

Both perspectives will also discuss the respective roles and responsibilities of the state, the utilities, and other important stakeholders like RTOs in developing and implementing an IRP.

Moderator: Hon. Kim Barrow, Pennsylvania

- **Hon. Kelsey Bagot, Virginia**
- **Hon. Zenon Christodoulou, New Jersey**
- **Joeseph Accardo, SVP State Regulatory Affairs & CS, Public Service Electric and Gas Co.**
- **Sarah Freeman, Regulatory Assistance Project**
- **Jason Stanek, Executive Director, Governmental Services, PJM**

A2: Ethics Session: Disclosure, and Trust: Ethical Decision-Making in Public Governance

In the complex landscape of public governance and regulatory oversight, the principles of impartiality and integrity are foundational to maintaining public trust. This session examines the ethical and practical challenges faced by commissioners and staff when navigating real or perceived conflicts of interest. Participants will explore how advance waivers, recusal standards, and disclosure norms can safeguard the decision-making process while ensuring transparency and accountability. Drawing on the framework of the ABA Model Rule 1.7 and related ethical standards, this session provides guidance on identifying potential conflicts, assessing when impartiality might reasonably be questioned, and implementing best practices to preserve both procedural fairness and public confidence in institutional decisions.

Moderator: Hon. Angie Hatton, Kentucky

- **Hon. Emma Rebhorn, New Jersey**
- **Ryan Palmer, Of Counsel, Verrill Law**
- **Gladys Brown Dutrieuille, Stevens Lee**
- **Charlotte Mitchell, McGuireWoods**

A3: Telecommunication Session: The FCC in a Broadband-Only World: Public Interest, Power, and the Future of Communications Regulation

As communications policy enters a fully broadband era, the role of the Federal Communications Commission is under debate. This session explores the growing tension between rhetoric and enforcement—examining how public statements about protecting consumers and competition compare with regulatory actions in practice.

The discussion will look forward: What is the FCC's appropriate role in a world where legacy networks have disappeared and virtually all communications ride over broadband? Who monitors service quality when traditional common-carrier frameworks fade? Should VoIP be treated as a Title II service, or does that approach misfit an IP-based ecosystem? And what are the practical consequences—good and bad—of lighter-touch or no regulation at all?

Participants will engage in a candid examination of what a future regulatory structure could look like when everything is VoIP, legacy silos no longer apply, and the communications marketplace is defined by convergence rather than categories. This session is designed for policymakers, regulators, and industry leaders who want to understand not just where communications law has been—but where it must go next.

Moderator: Sherry Lichtenberg, NARUC

- **Hon. Daniel Conway, Ohio**
- **Mignon Clyburn**
- **Radhika Karmarkar, Breezeline**

11:45 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. General Session #2 - Lunch Then Learn

Dancing with the Stars: Country Edition- Season 3

Kick Up Your Heels: A MACRUC Hoedown

Kick Up Your Heels: A MACRUC Hoedown

Grab your cowboy hats and boots and join us for a lively MACRUC Dancing with the Stars Hoedown! That's right, your favorite MACRUC session is back and is going country this year.

As PJM navigates a stampede of accelerating load growth, generator retirements, interconnection queue backlogs, and the rapid expansion of new technologies, regulators and stakeholders are being asked to take the reins on consequential decisions affecting consumers and grid stability.

Our participants won't be hitting the dance floor; instead, they'll be stepping up to the mic to debate these complex issues. Each speaker has just four minutes to two-step through their arguments before the clock runs out. Our celebrity judges will offer their critiques, but they won't be calling the tune—in the end, after the final do-si-do, the MACRUC audience will have the final say!

Designed for commissioners, policymakers, consumer advocates, and industry participants, this session blends candid dialogue with practical insights into how PJM stakeholders can stay in step while balancing reliability, affordability, and sustainability goals.

Emcee: Hon. Zenon Christodoulou "Com Z of New Jersey"

Dance #1: **Cotton Eye Joe: Are political capacity market price collars a good idea?**

Featuring: Marji Philips, LS Power

Dance #2: **The Pony Up Polka: What is the best way to make sure the data centers pay for the costs they bring to the grid?**

Dance #3: **Boot Scoot Boogie: How can PJM develop a believable load forecast?**

Dance #4: **The Two-Step: Why should someone invest in generation capacity in my state?**

Dance #5: **Achy Breaky Heart: Who has the better construct – Virginia or Pennsylvania?**

Hon. Kelsey Bagot, Virginia
&
Hon. Steve DeFrank, Pennsylvania

1:30 – 2:00 p.m. | Buckeye Coffee Break

2:00 – 3:00 p.m. | Concurrent Sessions B

B1: **An AfforDERble Solution: How DERs Can Keep Capacity High and Costs Low**

As states look for ways to address affordability concerns while meeting load growth demands, DERs can offer a cost-effective, scalable solution. By combining DERs such as batteries, solar, and smart devices, states can serve, shift, and reduce demand, deferring capital investments and improving utilization of our existing infrastructure. DERs can also provide capacity relief from significant projected new peak load growth from data center build-out through 2030, as well as the resulting capacity costs increases. Regulators are wrestling with how to structure DER entry into capacity markets and resource planning amid this tidal wave of data center demand. That prompts the questions: what role can DERs play in addressing the upcoming capacity crunch, what regulatory changes can help them scale to meet this challenge in wholesale markets and at the retail level? How can residential, commercial, and industrial customers participate in meaningful programs alike?

Moderator: Hon. Denise Sheehan, New York

- Hon. Bonnie Suchman, Maryland
- Coryann Arnett, Dominion
- Chloe Holden, Advanced Energy United
- Anne Hoskins, Generac
- Anwar Khan, Solar Landscape

B3: **Hot Topics & Cool Solutions**

Keeping up with the changes and new mandates in the water sector can feel like a full-time job. This panel cuts through the noise with "hot takes" on the industry's most urgent boiling points. Experts will break down the essentials of PFAS compliance, lead service line replacement, and the rising tide of affordability challenges. We will also dive into practical strategies for customer communication and the role of AI in streamlining daily utility operations. Join us for a fast-paced briefing designed to give you the clarity and cool-headed solutions you need to navigate these ever-evolving issues.

Moderator: Hon. Charlotte Lane, West Virginia

- Don Denton, President, Carolina Water Service of North Carolina & SVP Northeast Utilities
- Maryanne Hatch, Vice President, Rates and Regulatory Affairs, Veolia North America
- Jay Kooper, Vice President, General Counsel & Secretary, Middlesex Water
- Dr. Matthew Klein, Delta Bravo AI

3:00 – 3:30 p.m. | Buckeye Coffee Break

3:30 – 5:00 p.m. | General Session #3

Regulatory and Legislative Brief

Jumpstarting Growth: Legislative Solutions for Capacity Hurdles

Investing in Resilient Infrastructure: Balancing Affordability, Compliance, and Long-Term System Reliability

Regulatory and Legislative Brief

Jumpstarting Growth: Legislative Solutions for Capacity Hurdles

As electricity demand surges, state legislatures are implementing new statutory frameworks to ensure grid reliability and resource adequacy. This session features policymakers discussing "creative pathways" to clear capacity hurdles, with a focus on analyzing regulatory frameworks designed to streamline energy facility siting and permitting. By exploring these legal mechanisms, the panel will demonstrate how states are reducing administrative friction to accelerate critical infrastructure projects.

Participants will examine incentive structures used to promote new generation, including the legal nuances of developing on brownfield sites and modernizing "behind-the-meter" standards. Attendees will also assess jurisdiction and compliance by evaluating the intersection of state mandates with regional transmission organization (RTO) requirements and federal standards. Finally, the session allows attendees to compare legislative strategies across various state models to understand how different legal tools impact long-term resource adequacy and the evolving energy landscape.

Moderator: Hon. Jenifer French, Ohio

- The Hon. Brian M. Chavez, Ohio State Senate, District 30, Chair of the Senate Energy Committee and the Vice Chair of the Senate Finance Committee for the 136th General Assembly.
- The Hon. Adam Holmes, Ohio House of Representatives, Chair of the House Energy Committee,

Investing in Resilient Infrastructure: Balancing Affordability, Compliance, and Long-Term System Reliability

Facilitator: Hon. Kim Drexler, Delaware

- Colleen Arnold, President, Aqua Water

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17

7:30 – 8:30 a.m. | Breakfast & Live Art: Kreations by Kyle

8:30 – 10:25 a.m. | General Session #4:

Navigating FERC Order 1920

Power Play: New York's Nuclear Bet and the Regional Ripple Effect

Navigating FERC Order 1920

Featuring:
Mark Christie, Director, William & Mary Law School Center for Energy Law and Policy, Former Chair, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

Power Play: New York's Nuclear Bet and the Regional Ripple Effect

New York's decision to advance a new advanced nuclear facility through the New York Power Authority has implications that reach well beyond state borders. As load growth accelerates and dispatchable, zero-carbon resources become increasingly valuable, this session brings together the CEO of the New York Power Authority (NYPA), Nuclear Regulatory Commissioner David Wright and a leading Mid-Atlantic consumer advocate to examine what this project means for reliability, regulation, and ratepayer risk.

The CEO of NYPA will outline the strategic rationale for the project — including projected load growth, reliability needs, decarbonization mandates, site selection considerations, financing structure, and how the proposed facility would integrate into wholesale markets and transmission planning. The discussion will address why advanced nuclear is being pursued now, how risks are being managed, and what safeguards are in place to protect ratepayers.

Commissioner Wright will clarify federal licensing authority, safety standards, modernization of the reactor approval process, and the boundaries between federal oversight and state decision-making.

A regional consumer advocate will examine cost recovery mechanisms, potential market distortions, and who ultimately bears financial risk if construction timelines or budgets shift.

Panelists will also explore broader regional implications — including impacts on capacity markets, transmission expansion, and coordination between neighboring grid operators. For Mid-Atlantic regulators, this session offers a candid and balanced discussion of how one state's nuclear initiative could shape wholesale markets, regulatory frameworks, and energy policy across the interconnected Northeast.

Moderator: Hon. Kelsey Bagot, Virginia

- Hon. David Wright, Commissioner, Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)
- Justin Driscoll, President and CEO, New York Power Authority (NYPA)

10:25 – 10:45 a.m. | Buckeye Coffee Break

10:45 – 11:45 a.m. | Concurrent Sessions C

C1: The Regulatory Compact and the Cost of Growth: Rethinking Line Extension Policies and Long-Term Affordability

This session examines the regulatory compact and its role in balancing utility financial viability with the mandate for just reasonable rates. While market volatility often drives short-term bill fluctuations, long-term ratepayer affordability is dictated by the institutional frameworks governing infrastructure financing and cost-sharing.

Participants will conduct a legal analysis of Line Extension Allowances (LEAs)—foundational tools designed to uphold the obligation to serve while preventing inequitable cross-subsidization. As several jurisdictions move to phase out LEAs for natural gas utilities, our panel will evaluate the resulting impact on equity and economic efficiency. Attendees will gain insight into how properly structured line extension policies prevent uneconomic expansion and support the growth necessary to stabilize rates for all customers.

Moderator: Hon. Larry Friedeman, Ohio

- Juan Alvarado, American Gas Association
- Andy Tubbs, Energy Association of Pennsylvania

C3: Cooling & Powering the Cloud: Data Centers and Water Usage

As the digital economy expands, a new heavyweight consumer has arrived at the tap: the data center. This panel will explore the benefits and challenges that data centers pose to water utilities and their customers. Hear from panelists how these large-scale users can provide much-needed solutions for communities by funding essential infrastructure upgrades. However, for communities to see these benefits, regulators and community leaders need to know the right questions to ask. To this end, panelists will discuss the recent White House Data Centers Compact that states that developers must "pay their own way," as well as other considerations like the types of cooling technologies available to reduce water usage, and how data centers can partner with wastewater utilities to use reclaimed water as an alternative cooling source. This panel will seek to provide a roadmap for ensuring that the digital "thirst" for data does not come at the expense of community water security.

Moderator: Hon. Zenon Christodoulou, New Jersey

- Hon. Michael Bange, New Jersey
- James Barbato, Aqua America

C4: Rate Making 101

The session will provide a high-level overview of the rate setting process. The presentation includes a discussion of how revenue requirement is determined, how rates are determined, the regulatory principles relied upon and alternative rate structures and recovery mechanisms. The discussion will be led by David Spacht, CFO of Artesian Water Company, Inc and President of Artesian Wastewater Management, Inc. David has also been a faculty member for over 30 years of the NARUC Utility Rate School; a premier educational conference held on the east and west coast for new participants in the rate regulatory process.

Introduction: Hon. Joe Coviello, New Jersey

Instructor: David Spacht, CFO, Artesian Water Company

11:45 – 12:00 | Buckeye Coffee Break

12:00 – 1:00 | Concurrent Sessions D

D1: Balancing the Scales: Leveraging Infrastructure Riders and Regulatory Arrangements for Economic Growth

Economic development is inextricably linked to the physical and regulatory infrastructure available to new and expanding businesses. This session explores how states are positioning themselves as premier destinations for industrial and data center growth by utilizing innovative legal and utility mechanisms.

Using Ohio as a primary case study, panelists will analyze the Infrastructure Development Rider (IDR)—a tool codified in state law to fast-track site preparation and natural gas pipeline expansion—alongside "Reasonable Arrangements," (which can include industrial scale electric transmission demand response programs) which are customized utility rate structures designed to attract large-scale employers. The discussion will expand to compare these tools with emerging regulatory frameworks in states like Pennsylvania and Virginia, where commissions are navigating the same "gold rush" of high-load technology and manufacturing sectors.

From the perspectives of state government, utilities, and industrial developers, we will examine how these regulatory tools serve as a catalyst for investment while addressing the critical challenge of maintaining grid stability and ratepayer equity.

- Patrick Carr, Virginia

D2: Ethics: Regulating the Algorithm: Ethical Oversight of AI in Utility Decision-Making

Artificial intelligence is playing an expanding role in public utility regulation, including rate-setting, grid management, customer service, and compliance functions. While these technologies offer efficiencies and data-driven insights, they also raise significant concerns related to fairness, bias, transparency, accountability, and consumer protection. Utility regulators must ensure that AI-assisted decisions remain consistent with statutory mandates, due process principles, and public expectations of transparency and equity.

This session examines the ethical and governance challenges associated with both external and internal uses of AI in utility regulation. Participants will explore how professional duties of competence, confidentiality, supervision, and disclosure apply in an AI-enabled regulatory environment and will gain practical guidance on risk mitigation, governance frameworks, and best practices for responsible AI adoption in utility regulation.

Moderator: Hon. Chuck McLean, Maryland

- Hon. Obi Linton, Maryland
- Maureen Harris, NY Commissioner Emeritus, NYPA,
- Jennifer Berrier, Pennsylvania

D3: Guarding the Consumer Interest: From Environmental Hazards to Digital Equity

Moderator: Hon. John Williams, Ohio

- Angela Siefer, Digital Inclusion

1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Lunch on Own

2:45 – 4:15 p.m. | General Session #5

Transmission & Generation: Who Builds & Who's in Charge?

&

Transition of MACRUC Officers

2:45 – 4:15 p.m. Transmission & Generation in the Mid-Atlantic: Who Builds, Where It Goes, and Who's in Charge?

The Mid-Atlantic faces mounting pressure to add new generation as electrification, data centers, and reliability concerns drive demand. This session explores the need to plan where new capacity should be built so that the transmission needs can be appropriately planned — will supplies be near load, in resource-rich areas, or in transmission-constrained zones. This session will also explore reliability and affordability considerations.

Panelists will examine transmission development processes, improving coordination between PJM Interconnection and New York Independent System Operator, and whether regional planning and procurement should be more closely aligned. The discussion will also address the respective roles of the states and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in siting, markets, and transmission policy—and what regulatory adjustments may be necessary to ensure timely development in a rapidly transforming grid.

Moderator: Hon. Steve DeFrank, Pennsylvania

- Hon. Radina Valova, New York
- Stu Nachmias, ConEd
- Abe Silverman, Research Scholar, Johns Hopkins University
- Jason Stanek, PJM
- Evan Vaughan, MAREC Action

Installation of MACRUC 2026 – 2027 President

7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Discover Columbus Dinner at COSI: The Center of Science and Industry

Don't miss this all-access pass to one of the most innovative spaces in the country – COSI: the Center of Science and Industry. MACRUC combines a premier dinner with the opportunity to explore world-class exhibits and network with colleagues. Stepping outside our usual environment is where true innovation happens, and there is no better place to recharge your creative batteries than this inspiring museum backdrop, ensuring an evening of meaningful connection and discovery.

Attire: Casual

Transportation from the Hilton will be provided.

THURSDAY, JUNE 18

7:30 – 8:30 a.m. | Midwest Meet Up Breakfast

8:30 – 10:15 a.m. | General Session #6

Powering the Digital Surge: Multi-Stakeholder Strategies for Data Center Expansion?

8:30 – 10:15 a.m. | General Session #6:

Plugging into the Future: Making Data Center Load Flexibility a Reality

- Michael Panfil, Head of Legal and Policy, Emerald AI

Powering the Digital Surge: Multi-Stakeholder Strategies for Data Center Expansion

As the digital economy drives unprecedented demand for power, this session examines the regulatory and economic hurdles of data center expansion in the Mid-Atlantic Region through the lens of government regulators, Independent Power Producers (IPPs), and Regional Transmission Organizations (RTOs). Panelists will evaluate solutions for balancing industrial growth with grid reliability, including Commission-approved tariffs, market incentives, and "Bring Your Own Generation" (BYOG) models.

Moderator: Hon. Jehmal Hudson, Virginia

- Bill Fehrman, American Electric Power (AEP)
- Arnie Quinn, Vistra