

Facilitating Heating Sector Transformation in Rhode Island

Rhode Island is pursuing rapid heat sector decarbonization and is interested in exploring ways to facilitate a successful transformation without exacerbating energy burdens. These efforts are guided by Governor Raimondo's Executive Order 19-06 that requires the creation of strategies to foster a cleaner, affordable, and reliable heating sector in the Ocean State.

This retreat, convened by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center), in partnership with the state of Rhode Island, will convene state participants to understand technology pathways, think innovatively about a fuel-neutral utility business model, and proactively approach workforce development to meet the needs of a decarbonized heat sector. The retreat will be dynamic and interactive and will draw stakeholders into engaging discussions on how Rhode Island can be a leader in heating sector transformation.

AGENDA

January 28th, 2020

Division of Public Utilities and Carriers
Hearing Room A
89 Jefferson Boulevard
Warwick, RI

- 8:00-8:30 AM **Registration**
- 8:30-9:15 AM **Welcome, Introductions, and Meeting Goals**
Members of the Rhode Island planning team and the NGA Center will welcome participants, provide background, and outline the goals for the retreat. Participants will be asked to briefly introduce themselves.
- Speakers:**
- Linda George, Acting Administrator, Rhode Island Division of Public Utilities and Carriers
 - Nicholas Ucci, Acting Commissioner, Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources
 - Dan Lauf, Energy Program Director, NGA Center
- 9:15-10:30 AM **Pathways for Heat Sector Modernization: Technology Options for Decarbonizing Heat**
Decarbonizing the heating sector is key to Rhode Island meeting their carbon reduction goals. There are various technologies and strategies available to achieve this transition, including both individual home and district-style measures. This panel will provide an overview of those options and discuss the relative feasibility and cost-effectiveness of these technologies in Rhode Island.

Rhode Island In-State Retreat

Moderator:

- Dr. Jurgen Weiss, Principal, The Brattle Group

Speakers:

- David Lis, Director of Technology & Market Solutions, NEEP
- Dan LeFevers, Director, State and Consumer Programs, GTI
- Vincent Matarazzo, VRF Regional Account Manager, Johnson Controls

10:30-10:45 AM

Break

10:45-12:00 PM

Reimagining the Utility Business Model and Consumer Impact in an Electrified Future

Currently, National Grid Rhode Island serves as both the electric and gas distribution company for the majority of Rhode Island customers. Under existing regulatory structure, National Grid relies on each utility's customer base to separately fund maintenance and upgrades of each system. Panelists will discuss potential regulatory avenues to address potential regulatory constructs if the heating sector were to shift away from gas, including cost recovery and strategies to mitigate consumer impacts.

Moderator:

- Matt Rogotzke, Policy Analyst, NGA Center

Speakers:

- Sherri Billimoria, Senior Associate, Rocky Mountain Institute
- Bill Malee, Vice President, Regulation and Pricing Officer, National Grid
- Jeff Loiter, Principal Researcher, National Regulatory Research Institute

12:00-1:15 PM

Lunch and Participant Feedback

Participants will have an opportunity to share their reactions and feedback to the ideas discussed during the morning.

Moderator:

- Dan Lauf, National Governors Association

1:15-2:15 PM

Supporting the Workforce and Licensing Reforms Through Heat Sector Decarbonization

As the heating sector changes, workforce needs may change along with it. How can Rhode Island anticipate and address these potential disruptions to the existing workforce? Panelists will discuss best practices that workforce leaders are employing to address shifting short- and long-term workforce needs, including topics like job retraining programs, licensing reforms, and apprenticeship opportunities.

Moderator:

- Emma Cimino, Senior Policy Analyst, National Governors Association

Rhode Island In-State Retreat

Speakers:

- Scott Jensen, Director, RI Department of Labor and Training
- Roberta Fagan, Executive Director, Energy Marketers Association of Rhode Island
- Steve Kitchin, Vice President, Corporate Education and Training, New England Institute of Technology

2:15-2:30 PM

Break

2:30-3:30 PM

Participant Discussion: Input and Potential Paths Forward

Moderator:

- Dan Lauf, National Governors Association

3:30-4:00 PM

Wrap-up and Closing Remarks