2026 OMS Annual Meeting Speakers

Aaron Melda, Chairman and President, Ameren Missouri

Aaron Melda is chairman and president of Ameren Missouri and brings more than 25 years of experience in the energy and utility industry. Before joining Ameren Missouri in June 2026, he held several senior leadership positions at the Tennessee Valley Authority, most recently serving as senior vice president of strategy, commercial operations and external affairs. His expertise spans power generation, transmission, nuclear operations, energy delivery and strategic planning. Melda began his career at Siemens Power Generation and holds a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Georgia Tech and an MBA from Vanderbilt University.

Joe Sullivan, Commissioner, Minnesota PUC

Joseph K. Sullivan serves as Vice Chair of the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC), where he oversees regulatory matters involving the state's public utilities and energy sector. Appointed in April 2020 and reappointed in January 2026, Sullivan brings extensive experience in energy policy, utility regulation, renewable energy, transmission planning, and energy efficiency. Prior to joining the PUC, he served as Deputy Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Commerce's Division of Energy Resources and held positions with the Center for Energy and Environment and Wind on the Wires. He previously served as President of the Organization of MISO States (OMS). Sullivan holds degrees from Marquette University and the University of Wisconsin Law School.

Sarah Freeman, Principal, Regulatory Assistance Project and Council of Commissioners

Sarah Freeman has over 25 years' experience in utility law and policy. In 2025, Sarah completed nine years of service at the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission, where she regulated electric, gas, water and wastewater utilities. She joined RAP in 2025 as a principal and is a member of the Council of Commissioners.

As Commissioner, Sarah held leadership roles with the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), and the Organization of MISO States. Before her appointment to the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission, Sarah served the people of the Hoosier State in roles across all three branches of government. She started her legal career as a clerk to the Honorable Frank Sullivan of the Indiana Supreme Court and then represented the state of Indiana as a deputy attorney general in proceedings before state and federal trial and appellate courts. From 2000 to 2016, Sarah provided legal counsel to and drafted legislation for the 150 members of the Indiana General Assembly, focusing on utility and transportation law. Sarah holds degrees in French, psychology, and political science from Indiana University – Bloomington and a juris doctorate from the Maurer School of Law at Indiana University.

Steve Gaw, Senior VP of Markets and Infrastructure, Advanced Power Alliance

Steve Gaw is Senior Vice President of Markets and Infrastructure at the Advanced Power Alliance, where he focuses on regional transmission organization policy within the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) region and national issues affecting renewable energy development. An attorney and experienced energy policy leader, Gaw previously served as Speaker of the Missouri House of Representatives and Chair of the Missouri Public Service Commission. He was a founding director and past president of the Organization of MISO States (OMS) and a founding director of the SPP Regional State Committee. He holds a bachelor's degree in physics, graduating summa cum laude from Truman State University, and a law degree from the University of Missouri.

Ted Thomas, Founder, Energize Strategies

Ted Thomas is an energy consultant and founding partner of Energize Strategies, specializing in energy policy, utility regulation, and electricity markets. He previously served as Chairman of the Arkansas Public Service Commission from 2015 to 2022, where he held several leadership roles, including President of the Organization of MISO States (OMS). Thomas also chaired the Southwest Power Pool's Improved Resource Availability Task Force following Winter Storm Uri and served on the federal-state Joint Task Force on Electric Transmission. He holds a bachelor's degree in political science and a Juris Doctor from the University of Arkansas.

Daniel Hall, Senior VP – State Government Affairs, Invenergy

Daniel Hall serves as Senior Vice President of Government Affairs at Invenergy, where he leads government relations efforts and engages with policymakers on energy and infrastructure issues. His work supports Invenergy's development and operation of energy projects through engagement with state and federal officials and other government stakeholders. He earned his law degree from the University of Missouri School of Law in 1993 and was a member of the school's Law Review and Order of the Coif.

Earlier in his career, Hall served as Director of Government Affairs at Invenergy, representing the company on energy policy and regulatory matters, including transmission development and clean energy infrastructure. He has participated in industry discussions on the challenges of expanding transmission, including planning, permitting, and cost allocation. His legal education and experience in government affairs provide a foundation for navigating complex regulatory processes and building relationships with policymakers and stakeholders.

Aubrey Johnson, VP of System Planning and Competitive Transmission, MISO

Aubrey Johnson is vice president of system planning and competitive transmission for the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO). Johnson oversees all aspects of transmission plan development to meet MISO's future system needs. He is responsible for the planning process that yields the annual MISO Transmission Expansion Plan, including reliability and expansion planning, transmission cost allocation, and the competitive transmission developer selection and monitoring process. Johnson also oversees MISO's interregional planning efforts.

Chris Nelson, Commissioner, South Dakota PSC

Chris Nelson serves as Vice Chairman of the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (PUC), a position he has held since his appointment in 2011 by Governor Dennis Daugaard. He was subsequently elected in 2012 to complete the term and re-elected in 2016 and 2022, achieving the highest electoral percentage ever for a contested statewide race in South Dakota. Nelson has served multiple terms as both chairman and vice chairman of the PUC, where he focuses on ensuring utility reliability, expanding broadband access, and maintaining affordable rates for South Dakotans. He is also actively involved in national regulatory organizations, serving on the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) and representing South Dakota on the board of the Organization of MISO States.

Prior to his tenure at the PUC, Nelson served as South Dakota's Secretary of State from 2003 to 2011, following 13 years as the state's election supervisor and two years as the uniform commercial code supervisor. His leadership in election administration earned him several awards, including the 2009 Election Center's Professional Practices Program State Award. Nelson holds a bachelor's degree in animal science, with highest honors, from South Dakota State University. He resides in Pierre with his wife, Penny, and maintains a part-time cattle operation, reflecting his ongoing connection to agriculture.

Dan Scripps, Chair, Michigan PSC

Dan Scripps serves as Chair of the Michigan Public Service Commission, a position he has held since July 2020. Appointed to the Commission in 2019 and reappointed in 2023, he oversees regulatory matters involving Michigan's electric, natural gas, and telecommunications utilities. His work focuses on grid reliability, energy affordability, transmission planning, renewable energy development, and the state's energy transition.

Jessica Harrison, VP of Regulatory Engagement, AssetCool

Jessica Harrison serves as Vice President of Regulatory Engagement at AssetCool, where she works on regulatory policy and stakeholder engagement to support the adoption of technologies that increase transmission capacity and improve grid performance. She brings extensive experience in the energy sector, having previously served as Executive Director of Strategy at VEIR and in research and development leadership roles at the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO). Earlier in her career, she held energy advisory and consulting positions at KEMA and Navigant, focusing on energy strategy and distributed energy resources. Harrison holds a master's degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan.

Richard Boehkne, Founder and Principal, Lake State Labs

Richard Boehnke is the founder and principal of Lake State Labs, where he focuses on modernizing the electric grid through virtual power plants (VPPs), demand flexibility, and innovative energy market design. He works with utilities, regulators, and other stakeholders to develop solutions that improve grid reliability, energy affordability, and resilience. Previously, Boehnke served as Director of Demand Flexibility Markets at Recurve, where he led the development and implementation of Demand FLEXmarkets, delivering approximately $35 million in system benefits. He holds a master's degree in Sustainable Energy Technology from Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands and received a Fulbright scholarship to support his studies.

Drew Siebenaler, Managing Consultant (Transmission), Energy Futures Group

Drew Siebenaler is a Managing Consultant specializing in transmission at Energy Futures Group, where he supports clients on transmission planning, generator and load interconnections, and electric grid development. He brings more than 14 years of experience in transmission and long-range planning, with particular expertise in the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) region, wholesale transmission cost allocation, and energy market price formation. Before joining Energy Futures Group in June 2026, Siebenaler served as Manager of Economic Transmission Planning at Xcel Energy and most recently managed technical support for generator and load interconnections at Electric Power Engineers.