

Commission on Fossil Fuel Workforce

Meeting Minutes

August 19, 2025

ATTENDANCE		
Member	Affiliation	Attendance
Melissa Lavinson, <i>co-chair</i>	Executive Director, Office of Energy Transformation	X
Josh Cutler, <i>co-chair</i>	Undersecretary of Labor, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development	X
Abel Vargas	President at Valley Home Insulation	X
Amy McGuire	Senior Director, Market Development at Highland Electric Fleets	
Ana Sofia	Senior Program Director at La Colaborativa	X
Chris Sherman	Senior Vice President at Cogentrix Energy, LLC	X
Dan Leary	President of Local 369 at Utility Workers Union-America (UWUA)	X
Dave Keating	International Representative at International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)	
Frank Callahan	President, Massachusetts Building Trades Unit (MBTU)	X
Greandoll Oliva	Youth Leader in Chelsea and Community Organizer with GreenRoots	
Harry Brett	International Representative at United Association (UA)	X
Jennifer Applebaum	Managing Director of Workforce Development, MassCEC	X
John Cook	President at Springfield Technical Community College	X
Kristen Gowin	Executive Manager at National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) of Greater Boston	X
Larry Lessard	Director at Achieve Renewable Energy, LLC	X
María Belén Power	Undersecretary of Environmental Justice & Equity	Delegate Jonathan Guzman
Mark Melnik	Director, Economic & Public Policy Research at UMass Donahue Institute	X
Mike Vartabedian	Assistant Directing Business Representative at International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers	X
Nikki Bruno	Vice President, Clean Technologies at Eversource Energy	X
Sarah Wilkinson	Commissioner of Division of Occupational Licensure and Office of Public Safety, Executive Office of Economic Development	X
Steve Finnigan	Sub District Director at United Steelworkers (USW)	Delegate Joe Endicott

Proceedings:

The meeting with the Special Commission on the Fossil Fuel Workforce commenced at 1:38 PM with co-chair Lavinson welcoming attendees. The Commission voted in favor to approve meeting minutes from the July 10th meeting. Co-chair Lavinson then opened up the floor for initial comments and feedback on a draft of the Commission report that will be submitted to the legislature in December 2025.

One Commission member asked about the timeline for receiving a draft of the executive summary and legislative recommendations. Co-chair Lavinson responded that the executive summary will be drafted and circulated after receiving all comments on the draft report, and that the Commission would begin to review and discuss potential legislative recommendations at the current meeting. Co-chair Cutler reminded the Commission that members are encouraged to provide feedback and submit additional comments on the draft report. Co-chair Lavinson then introduced six potential draft legislative recommendations for the report to be sent to Commission members for review after the meeting discussion.

The Commission next discussed the data sources used in the report. The two main sources used are the MassCEC Workforce Needs Assessment and the U.S. Energy and Employment Jobs Report (USEER). The Commission discussed the need to standardize between sources. One member offered to facilitate a meeting with the consulting firm that MassCEC used to support their report. An open offer to join this meeting was made to all Commission members and two agreed to participate.

The Commission next discussed the information included in the draft report on the top 30 energy occupations in MA and their associated risk of displacement through 2030 and 2035. Commission members were asked how best to present the information in the report and determine displacement risk levels.

One Commission member asked about the source data for median hourly wage. David Jan, Senior Applied Economist at the MA Department of Economic Research, clarified that the data is from Lightcast, which aggregates Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS) data, census data, and state data. A suggestion was made to add 25th and 75th percentile column for presenting hourly wages to provide a better understanding of the wage range for each occupation.

Most Commission members agreed that the Top 30 occupation and displacement risk table was reasonable with good quantitative and qualitative analysis. One Commission member recommended that trend drivers could include trends from both the energy transition and general industry trends, such as the impact of economic slowdown. The spreadsheet was amended to call out "Trend Drivers (related to transition to clean energy)" to account for this, as industry-wide trend drivers are not in scope for this Commission.

Sarah Wilkinson, Commissioner of Division of Occupational Licensure (DOL), noted that DOL has thousands more licensed plumbers and electricians than what is listed in the spreadsheet. Some of the discrepancy could be due to licensed plumbers or electricians who no longer practice, but

the Commission discussed how it could be hard to explain the discrepancy when reporting exact numbers. Co-chair Lavinson suggested presenting ranges or removing the exact number of individuals “employed” in an occupation and focusing on the displacement risk trends. The Commission members reviewing data sources will consider how to best address and provide alternatives. Finally, Commission members were asked to review the table and provide feedback by September 8th.

The Commission then reviewed the report timeline. Comments on the draft report are due by September 8th, after which the internal team will review and incorporate comments into the next draft of the report for Commission review by October 1st. Co-chair Lavinson flagged that there will likely be a concurrent review in November by Secretaries Tepper and Jones, and Legislative and Cabinet Affairs for expediency. Katherine O’Malley, Deputy Executive Director of the Office of Energy Transformation, reminded the Commission of next steps, including site visits to National Grid on Wednesday, September 3rd at 10am and to Eversource on Friday, September 12th at 9-9:30am (start time is to be determined). O’Malley noted that Commission members can expect emails with the updated table of occupations for review, the list of draft recommendations in the report for review, and additional information regarding on site visit for registration.

The next Commission meeting will be in September to discuss the report and finalize recommendations. The meeting concluded at 2:32pm.