FUTURE FOCUS:
The New Climate Economy

SIGN UP NOW
for Fresh Energy’s Virtual Benefit Breakfast
October 14, 2021 | 8-9 a.m.

FEATURED SPEAKER:
Donnel Baird, CEO of BlocPower

Register to join Fresh Energy and award-winning climate tech entrepreneur Donnel Baird for a fascinating discussion of how ambitious public policy can spur private markets toward a just, carbon-neutral future.

Donnel Baird, CEO of Brooklyn-based BlocPower, is proving that businesses can tackle carbon pollution while making a profit and creating family-supporting jobs.

All proceeds from this inspiring event will support Fresh Energy’s work to speed the transition to an equitable carbon-neutral economy in Minnesota, the Midwest, and beyond.

RSVP: fresh-energy.org/benefitbreakfast
$125 suggested minimum donation
Hello Fresh Energy community!

It has been a year unlike any other. Amid an unprecedented public health crisis that laid bare the racial and economic disparities in our society, calls for social justice echoing from every corner, and violently extreme weather events playing out across the country and right here at home, I’m proud to report to you that Fresh Energy has continued to usher Minnesota onward, making progress toward climate goals in a meaningful and equitable way.

To be clear, the climate crisis demands transformational action and there’s much more that must be done; however, I’m honored to be part of our growing Fresh Energy team and the significant progress they’re making to clean up and modernize our energy sector, reduce emissions from transportation, decarbonize our buildings, ensure a just transition that benefits all Minnesotans, and so much more.

While we fought (and won) many clean energy and climate battles at the federal and state levels, I’m most pleased about one particular win that was 13 years in the making: Clean Cars Minnesota. We knew in 2008 what we’re adamant about reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that climate change causes, but making the transition to electric vehicles wasn’t easy, and speed bumps along the way in 2020 when major opposition forces, including Big Oil, joined the fray—all misinformation. Our team faced this challenge head on while some Minnesota legislators worked to spread misinformation. Our team took the fight to Minnesota’s 84 electric vehicle dealerships and we’ve made it to the other side.

You likely saw that Clean Cars Minnesota hit some costs, help grow the state’s economy, and position Minnesotans’ options for electric vehicles, protect our resourced communities—but also increase particularly for communities of color and under-resourced communities—but also increase disparities in our society, calls for social justice echoing from every corner, and violently extreme weather events playing out across the country and right here at home, I’m proud to report to you that Fresh Energy has continued to usher Minnesota onward, making progress toward climate goals in a meaningful and equitable way.

To be clear, the climate crisis demands transformational action and there’s much more that must be done; however, I’m honored to be part of our growing Fresh Energy team and the significant progress they’re making to clean up and modernize our energy sector, reduce emissions from transportation, decarbonize our buildings, ensure a just transition that benefits all Minnesotans, and so much more.

While we fought (and won) many clean energy and climate battles at the federal and state levels, I’m most pleased about one particular win that was 13 years in the making: Clean Cars Minnesota. We knew in 2008 what we’re adamant about reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that climate change causes, but making the transition to electric vehicles wasn’t easy, and speed bumps along the way in 2020 when major opposition forces, including Big Oil, joined the fray—all misinformation. Our team faced this challenge head on while some Minnesota legislators worked to spread misinformation. Our team took the fight to Minnesota’s 84 electric vehicle dealerships and we’ve made it to the other side.

You likely saw that Clean Cars Minnesota hit some costs, help grow the state’s economy, and position Minnesotans’ options for electric vehicles, protect our resourced communities—but also increase disparities in our society, calls for social justice echoing from every corner, and violently extreme weather events playing out across the country and right here at home, I’m proud to report to you that Fresh Energy has continued to usher Minnesota onward, making progress toward climate goals in a meaningful and equitable way.

To be clear, the climate crisis demands transformational action and there’s much more that must be done; however, I’m honored to be part of our growing Fresh Energy team and the significant progress they’re making to clean up and modernize our energy sector, reduce emissions from transportation, decarbonize our buildings, ensure a just transition that benefits all Minnesotans, and so much more.

While we fought (and won) many clean energy and climate battles at the federal and state levels, I’m most pleased about one particular win that was 13 years in the making: Clean Cars Minnesota. We knew in 2008 what we’re adamant about reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that climate change causes, but making the transition to electric vehicles wasn’t easy, and speed bumps along the way in 2020 when major opposition forces, including Big Oil, joined the fray—all misinformation. Our team faced this challenge head on while some Minnesota legislators worked to spread misinformation. Our team took the fight to Minnesota’s 84 electric vehicle dealerships and we’ve made it to the other side.

You likely saw that Clean Cars Minnesota hit some costs, help grow the state’s economy, and position Minnesotans’ options for electric vehicles, protect our resourced communities—but also increase disparities in our society, calls for social justice echoing from every corner, and violently extreme weather events playing out across the country and right here at home, I’m proud to report to you that Fresh Energy has continued to usher Minnesota onward, making progress toward climate goals in a meaningful and equitable way.

To be clear, the climate crisis demands transformational action and there’s much more that must be done; however, I’m honored to be part of our growing Fresh Energy team and the significant progress they’re making to clean up and modernize our energy sector, reduce emissions from transportation, decarbonize our buildings, ensure a just transition that benefits all Minnesotans, and so much more.

While we fought (and won) many clean energy and climate battles at the federal and state levels, I’m most pleased about one particular win that was 13 years in the making: Clean Cars Minnesota. We knew in 2008 what we’re adamant about reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that climate change causes, but making the transition to electric vehicles wasn’t easy, and speed bumps along the way in 2020 when major opposition forces, including Big Oil, joined the fray—all misinformation. Our team faced this challenge head on while some Minnesota legislators worked to spread misinformation. Our team took the fight to Minnesota’s 84 electric vehicle dealerships and we’ve made it to the other side.

You likely saw that Clean Cars Minnesota hit some costs, help grow the state’s economy, and position Minnesotans’ options for electric vehicles, protect our resourced communities—but also increase disparities in our society, calls for social justice echoing from every corner, and violently extreme weather events playing out across the country and right here at home, I’m proud to report to you that Fresh Energy has continued to usher Minnesota onward, making progress toward climate goals in a meaningful and equitable way.

To be clear, the climate crisis demands transformational action and there’s much more that must be done; however, I’m honored to be part of our growing Fresh Energy team and the significant progress they’re making to clean up and modernize our energy sector, reduce emissions from transportation, decarbonize our buildings, ensure a just transition that benefits all Minnesotans, and so much more.

While we fought (and won) many clean energy and climate battles at the federal and state levels, I’m most pleased about one particular win that was 13 years in the making: Clean Cars Minnesota. We knew in 2008 what we’re adamant about reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that climate change causes, but making the transition to electric vehicles wasn’t easy, and speed bumps along the way in 2020 when major opposition forces, including Big Oil, joined the fray—all misinformation. Our team faced this challenge head on while some Minnesota legislators worked to spread misinformation. Our team took the fight to Minnesota’s 84 electric vehicle dealerships and we’ve made it to the other side.

You likely saw that Clean Cars Minnesota hit some costs, help grow the state’s economy, and position Minnesotans’ options for electric vehicles, protect our resourced communities—but also increase disparities in our society, calls for social justice echoing from every corner, and violently extreme weather events playing out across the country and right here at home, I’m proud to report to you that Fresh Energy has continued to usher Minnesota onward, making progress toward climate goals in a meaningful and equitable way.

To be clear, the climate crisis demands transformational action and there’s much more that must be done; however, I’m honored to be part of our growing Fresh Energy team and the significant progress they’re making to clean up and modernize our energy sector, reduce emissions from transportation, decarbonize our buildings, ensure a just transition that benefits all Minnesotans, and so much more.

While we fought (and won) many clean energy and climate battles at the federal and state levels, I’m most pleased about one particular win that was 13 years in the making: Clean Cars Minnesota. We knew in 2008 what we’re adamant about reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that climate change causes, but making the transition to electric vehicles wasn’t easy, and speed bumps along the way in 2020 when major opposition forces, including Big Oil, joined the fray—all misinformation. Our team faced this challenge head on while some Minnesota legislators worked to spread misinformation. Our team took the fight to Minnesota’s 84 electric vehicle dealerships and we’ve made it to the other side.

You likely saw that Clean Cars Minnesota hit some costs, help grow the state’s economy, and position Minnesotans’ options for electric vehicles, protect our resourced communities—but also increase disparities in our society, calls for social justice echoing from every corner, and violently extreme weather events playing out across the country and right here at home, I’m proud to report to you that Fresh Energy has continued to usher Minnesota onward, making progress toward climate goals in a meaningful and equitable way.

To be clear, the climate crisis demands transformational action and there’s much more that must be done; however, I’m honored to be part of our growing Fresh Energy team and the significant progress they’re making to clean up and modernize our energy sector, reduce emissions from transportation, decarbonize our buildings, ensure a just transition that benefits all Minnesotans, and so much more.

While we fought (and won) many clean energy and climate battles at the federal and state levels, I’m most pleased about one particular win that was 13 years in the making: Clean Cars Minnesota. We knew in 2008 what we’re adamant about reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that climate change causes, but making the transition to electric vehicles wasn’t easy, and speed bumps along the way in 2020 when major opposition forces, including Big Oil, joined the fray—all misinformation. Our team faced this challenge head on while some Minnesota legislators worked to spread misinformation. Our team took the fight to Minnesota’s 84 electric vehicle dealerships and we’ve made it to the other side.

You likely saw that Clean Cars Minnesota hit some costs, help grow the state’s economy, and position Minnesotans’ options for electric vehicles, protect our resourced communities—but also increase disparities in our society, calls for social justice echoing from every corner, and violently extreme weather events playing out across the country and right here at home, I’m proud to report to you that Fresh Energy has continued to usher Minnesota onward, making progress toward climate goals in a meaningful and equitable way.

To be clear, the climate crisis demands transformational action and there’s much more that must be done; however, I’m honored to be part of our growing Fresh Energy team and the significant progress they’re making to clean up and modernize our energy sector, reduce emissions from transportation, decarbonize our buildings, ensure a just transition that benefits all Minnesotans, and so much more.

While we fought (and won) many clean energy and climate battles at the federal and state levels, I’m most pleased about one particular win that was 13 years in the making: Clean Cars Minnesota. We knew in 2008 what we’re adamant about reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that climate change causes, but making the transition to electric vehicles wasn’t easy, and speed bumps along the way in 2020 when major opposition forces, including Big Oil, joined the fray—all misinformation. Our team faced this challenge head on while some Minnesota legislators worked to spread misinformation. Our team took the fight to Minnesota’s 84 electric vehicle dealerships and we’ve made it to the other side.

Today, after surmounting everything the opposition could throw at it—and with the help of thousands of Minnesotans—I’m proud to say that Governor Tim Walz has made Minnesota a clean cars state! But we can’t slow down now. Better emissions standards for Minnesota are just one piece of the puzzle. I look forward to keeping you up to date as we continue to move Minnesota, and the United States, toward a healthier, more just future.

With gratitude,

Michael Noble
As a result of your investment in Fresh Energy, we were able to ensure...

$55,000,000 from the Renewable Development Account for clean energy projects around the state, including the Prairie Island Indian Community’s net-zero energy project.

250-300% increase in investor-owned utilities’ minimum spending for energy efficiency programs serving under-resourced households thanks to the ECO Act.

28 Expert Testimonies were provided by Fresh Energy policy staff and specialists in support of electric transportation, better buildings, and clean energy at the Minnesota Legislature and Public Utilities Commission.

1M Tons Less Carbon will be emitted annually by 2030 and 2.5 million metric tons annually by 2050 thanks to clean car standards.

55% of electricity generation in Minnesota was from renewables and carbon-free sources in 2020. Renewable generation also surpassed coal for the first time.

588 megawatts of new wind and solar were added by Minnesota utilities in 2020, enough to supply 125,000 homes and apartments.

6 of 6 remaining electricity-generating coal plants in Minnesota have set retirement dates, with closures beginning in 2024.

Fresh Energy’s mission is to shape and drive bold policy solutions to achieve equitable carbon-neutral economies. Together we are working toward a vision of a just, prosperous, and resilient future powered by a shared commitment to a carbon-neutral economy.
CLEAN EFFICIENT POWER

Generating electricity without carbon pollution is a crucial step toward a carbon-neutral future.

Through leadership as energy policy experts and active engagement at the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, state Legislature, and other decision-making venues, Fresh Energy is working to advance modern energy efficiency, end fossil fuel emissions, and dramatically increase renewable electricity generation. As a result of our efforts, coal plants are closing or running less often, utilities are making historic investments in more efficient systems, and wind, solar, and battery storage are an increasing part of Minnesota’s energy system. We are planning for the grid of the future.

Thanks to three years of Fresh Energy analysis and advocacy, Xcel Energy has removed a new fossil gas plant in Becker, Minnesota, from its Integrated Resource Plan, which will save Xcel customers hundreds of millions of dollars and prevent tons of new greenhouse gas emissions. We also made excellent progress in improving the electric grid, and securing reduced coal operations in multiple key plants.

ENERGY ACCESS AND EQUITY

As the energy sector strives to aggressively decarbonize to mitigate the impacts of climate change, it has an obligation to ensure a just and equitable transition for marginalized communities.

Fresh Energy is committed to ensuring that the transition to clean energy benefits all and equity is a key consideration in our work across programs. In multiple state and national forums, we also shape renewable energy program design, energy efficiency and weatherization investments, and other initiatives to ensure that under-resourced individuals and communities are served, along with all utility consumers. This year, we successfully advocated for the ECO Act, a major bill that updates and modernizes Minnesota’s flagship energy efficiency law known as the Conservation Improvement Program (CIP). The ECO Act, among other things, significantly increases utility efficiency programs for under-resourced communities.

CENTER FOR POLLINATORS IN ENERGY

Fresh Energy develops and leads special projects in Minnesota and other states to expand the number of constituencies supporting clean energy—the Center for Pollinators in Energy is a central aspect of this work.

Fresh Energy’s Center for Pollinators in Energy is a national leader in advancing the agricultural and ecological compatibility of large-scale PV solar, including the use of deep-rooted grasses and flowering plants that create acres of pollinator habitat, improve water quality, and sequester carbon. This year a record number of regional and global energy companies highlighted the compatibility and ecological benefits of hosting honey bee hives or encouraging wild pollinators at their solar farms.

BENEFICIAL ELECTRIFICATION

To achieve the dramatic emission reductions needed, we must transition carbon-intensive parts of our economy—such as transportation and home heating—off of fossil fuel and onto renewable electricity.

Fresh Energy is actively working to electrify transportation by encouraging bold action by electric utilities, shaping investments in charging infrastructure and electric buses, and playing a leadership role in multiple collaboratives that address the health and justice issues around air quality and transportation. And this year, after 13 years of advocacy from Fresh Energy and partners, Minnesota will become a clean cars state, a move that will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and net an estimated $1,600 lifetime savings on each new passenger vehicle by 2025.

We are also shaping policy solutions, leading market transformation and education, and advocating for proof-of-concept models that demonstrate strategies for achieving equitable benefits while moving toward carbon-neutral buildings. The passage of the ECO Act and the Natural Gas Innovation Act provide a clear path for utilities to implement electrification measures in new and existing buildings. And, a year after launching the Midwest Building Decarbonization Coalition, we have successfully engaged 200+ individuals and 100+ organizations across eight states in the Midwest to build capacity to advance equitable building decarbonization.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Decisions on how Minnesota develops new buildings will shape our carbon emissions and economy for generations to come.

If we build super-efficient structures, they can be heated and cooled with small amounts of renewable electricity. If we do not build new structures efficiently, it will add significantly to long-term operations and maintenance costs, not to mention carbon emissions—burdens that will fall more heavily on under-resourced households. Fresh Energy is working to ensure that Minnesota’s building energy code is strong and effectively adopted and enforced. Our experts are also being called upon to serve in international residential code development processes.

ENERGY NEWS NETWORK

Editorially independent from Fresh Energy’s policy work, the Energy News Network (ENN) is staffed by professional editors and a team of more than a dozen journalists who cover state-based stories in a regional context. The more than 30 original news articles produced by Energy News Network reporters each month shine a light on subjects that would otherwise go unreported, and our journalism is regularly republished or quoted in trade publications, traditional media outlets, and in other arenas. In 2021, ENN launched and welcomed its inaugural fellow, Rukiya Colvin (pictured right), into the Detroit Energy and Environment Reporting Fellowship, a program with the goal of recruiting, uplifting, and mentoring Black, Indigenous, and other journalists of color. Interested in learning more? We have so much to share with you! Browse our updated resource page at fresh-energy.org/publications.
FEATURE EVENT | VIRTUAL BENEFIT BREAKFAST

FUTURE FOCUS:
The New Climate Economy

SIGN UP NOW
for Fresh Energy’s Virtual Benefit Breakfast
October 14, 2021 | 8-9 a.m.

FEATURED SPEAKER:
Donnel Baird, CEO of BlocPower

Register to join Fresh Energy and award-winning climate tech entrepreneur Donnel Baird for a fascinating discussion of how ambitious public policy can spur private markets toward a just, carbon-neutral future.

Donnel Baird, CEO of Brooklyn-based BlocPower, is proving that businesses can tackle carbon pollution while making a profit and creating family-supporting jobs.

All proceeds from this inspiring event will support Fresh Energy’s work to speed the transition to an equitable carbon-neutral economy in Minnesota, the Midwest, and beyond.

RSVP: fresh-energy.org/benefitbreakfast
$125 suggested minimum donation