



Speaker Biographies

ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

MODERATOR:

Delegate Melissa Wells, *District 40, Baltimore City*



Delegate Melissa Wells is a community advocate, labor leader, and financial security specialist. She is a proud resident of Charles Center, and a longtime advocate for neighborhoods in the 40th District.

Delegate Wells serves as the 1st Vice President of the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland. She is the 2020 Deputy Majority Whip, 2019 Environment and Transportation Committee; 2019 Housing and Real Property Subcommittee of the Environment and Transportation Committee; 2020 Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Open Space of the Environment and Transportation Committee, and 2019 Women Legislators of Maryland

As a member of the Baltimore Washington Building Trades Unions, Delegate Wells works with Baltimore's underserved communities. She helps residents—including women, youth, and returning citizens—find apprenticeships and secure family-supporting careers that provide the stability we all deserve.

PANELISTS:

Staci Hartwell, *Environmental and Climate Justice Committee Chair, Maryland State Conference of the NAACP*



Staci Hartwell honed her energy expertise while working with energy giant and innovator Tesla, where she mounted comprehensive strategies for increasing market share for solar. She developed a grassroots and “grasstops” approach to advancing the adoption of solar through faith-based, social and community groups, employment retraining organizations, and institutes of higher education.

As a consultant, she has been responsible for the sales and installation of over 40 megawatts of residential, commercial, and industrial solar in Washington, DC, and Maryland. As a community volunteer/advocate, she serves as co-chair for Environmental and Climate Justice with the NAACP Maryland State Conference, where she has orchestrated the MD Solar Equity Initiative, a solar awareness, and jobs campaign; the “Earth Day Solar Awareness” project; and the internationally recognized “Climate Justice is Racial Justice” awareness campaign.



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PANELISTS:

Jermaine Jones, *Baltimore Director, Baltimore D.C. Building Trades Council*



Jermaine Jones, a lifelong Baltimorean, is a leader in both his community and the labor movement. He is a proud graduate of the public school system and went on to pursue a Bachelor of Arts from Syracuse University. After earning his degree, Jermaine worked as a community organizer for LiUNA! (Laborers International Union of North America), working to protect the wages and jobs of low-income families. He also spearheaded and organized community initiatives that helped neighborhoods hold local governments accountable for addressing the concerns and needs of their constituents.

Jermaine worked his way up the ranks at LiUNA! and eventually became Business Manager, a position in which he represented over 1,000 workers in construction. This work allowed him to pursue his passion of protecting the rights of workers and ensuring every person feels safe on the job; and renewed his conviction that all workers be treated with dignity and respect, and receive honest day's pay for a hard day's work. His work with LiUNA! led to his election as President of the Metropolitan Baltimore Council AFL-CIO. Under his leadership, the Metro Baltimore Council has been instrumental in several campaigns, including successfully blocking privatization of Baltimore City Water System, supporting the unionization of Johns Hopkins nurses, and increasing Maryland's minimum wage to \$15. Now at the Baltimore/DC Metro Building and Construction Trades Council, one of Jermaine's goals is to strength the relationship between local community and the Trades; and ensure all citizens throughout the Baltimore Metropolitan area have access to quality jobs consisting of a career path, access to affordable health care, and the opportunity to one day retire with dignity.

Maynard Smith, *Maryland Business Engagement Manager, US Wind*



Maynard Smith is a business development and diversity & compliance consulting expert, having support diversity inclusion projects for MGM National Harbor, Woodrow Wilson Bridge, Prince George's County Maryland Supplier Development & Diversity Division, US Homeland Security, Cyber Security Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation and 2020 Black Farmers Cooperative. Maynard volunteers on several community boards to include support of Family Justice Center and Progressive Life Center of Prince George County Maryland and Visit Baltimore organization.



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PANELISTS:

Sacoby Wilson, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Maryland Institute for Applied Environmental Health, University of Maryland



Dr. Sacoby Wilson is an Associate Professor with the Maryland Institute for Applied Environmental Health and Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics in the University of Maryland, College Park School of Public Health. Dr. Wilson has 15 years of experience as an environmental health scientist in the areas of exposure science, environmental justice, environmental health disparities, community-engaged research including crowd science and community-based participatory research (CBPR), water quality analysis, air pollution studies, built environment, industrial animal production, climate

change, community resiliency and sustainability. He works primarily in partnership with community-based organizations to study and address environmental justice and health issues and translate research to action.

Dr. Wilson directs the Community Engagement, Environmental Justice and Health (CEEJH) laboratory. CEEJH is focused on providing technical assistance and research support to communities fighting against environmental injustice and environmental health disparities in the DMV region and across the nation.

Dr. Wilson has worked tirelessly to build environmental justice organizations and coalitions. He is Co-Founder of the DMV Environmental Justice Coalition and Founder of 17 for Peace and Justice, an environmental justice advocacy organization. He is on the steering committee for the recently relaunched National Black Environmental Justice Network (NBEJN). Additionally, he hosts an annual environmental justice symposium at the University of Maryland that brings together community members, advocates, policymakers, researchers, students, and practitioners to discuss ways to address environmental justice issues in the DMV region and around the country.