

CLIMATECH

ClimaTech 2026

Session Title: Bridging the Load Gap - A Discussion on the Bring Your Own Distributed Capacity (BYODC) Concept

Date & Time: Tuesday, May 5th from 1:00 – 1:40 PM (40 Minutes)

Location: Wimberley (Main Stage)

Description (*draft*):

In January 2026, the Alliance to Save Energy (ASE) released its latest paper, published in partnership with The Ad Hoc Group (AHG), Bridging the Load Gap: A Collaborative Path for Utilities, Hyperscalers and Customers, which put forth a framework for direct hyper scaler investment in demand-side solutions such as residential solar/storage, demand response, and energy efficiency to help alleviate grid constraints and bring new data centers online faster. This panel will unpack the details of what ASE and AHG call the Bring Your Own Distributed Capacity (BYODC) framework, including insights from hyperscalers, implementers, technology providers, and more.

Moderator: Annie Gilleo, Vice President, Ad Hoc Group

Panelists:

- Ari Matusiak, Co-Founder, President & CEO, Rewiring America
- Paula Glover, President, Alliance to Save Energy
- Brendan Reed, Vice President, Growth, Sparkfund

Key Themes:

- Paula - what the concept is and why it matters to the Alliance // what is follow up from the paper look like
- Brendan - examples of Capacity Connect and how Sparkfund is thinking about additional opportunities and barriers // what the Capacity Connect program looks like (Google, Utility, Community Partnership)
- Ari - homegrown energy and why it's important // what's the pitch to hyperscalers, what is resigning // what is Rewiring America's role (thinktank to implementer)

How is everyone engaging with hyperscalers, data centers, utilities? (i.e. Google → invested in paper and program)

Unpack friction [challenges vs benefits]

What are the things we can do today that will address affordability that will solve the biggest problem we have around energy efficiency

Panelist Bios:

Ari Matusiak

Ari Matusiak is co-founder, president and CEO of Rewiring America, a national organization forging the affordable path to an all-electric future, that was recognized on Fast Company's Most Innovative Companies list two years running. Matusiak has been a national leader in clean energy for over a decade, building and advising companies and organizations and securing billions of dollars in capital to scale solutions that help people and communities thrive. Earlier, he served as special assistant to President Obama in the White House, overseeing the president's relationship with the private sector and focused on economic policy tied to job creation and economic competitiveness.

Brendan Reed

Brendan has worked for over 15 years to accelerate the growth of distributed energy resources. He currently leads Growth at Sparkfund, a utility services company specializing in supporting utility-led deployments of distributed capacity across their systems. He has worked across key commercial development and

policy roles at Sparkfund, Tesla and SolarCity leveraging new business models that have scaled technologies like solar, storage and electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

Paula Glover

Paula R. Glover brings more than 25 years of leadership and expertise in the energy sector to her role as president of the Alliance to Save Energy, a bipartisan, nonprofit coalition of business, government, environmental and academic leaders dedicated to advancing federal energy efficiency policy. She has a background in electricity and natural gas distribution. Previously, she served as President and CEO of the American Association of Blacks in Energy (AABE). Ms. Glover chairs the Clean Energy Works Board and serves on the board of Talos Energy as well as the boards of the Keystone Policy Center, Rocky Mountain Institute, Resources for the Future and the U.S. Energy Association.

Questions:

General Overview

1. **Paula:** Walk us through what problem the BYODC framework is actually trying to solve. Why did the timing of this paper feel urgent to ASE?
2. **Ari:** Rewiring America has spent years making the case for electrification at the household level. How does BYODC fit into that vision?
3. **Brendan:** When people ask me about real-life examples of BYODC, I tend to point them toward SparkFund's Capacity*Connect. Can you talk about that program, explain what it is and how it (could) fit into the idea of hyperscaler investment in DERs?
4. We're seeing a real pullback in state-level energy efficiency funding at the same moment grid demand is surging. Does that contradiction create the opening for BYODC or does it create a trap, where private capital steps in and lets states/utilities off the hook in the near term - maybe creating risk in the long-term?
5. We're talking about some big changes to some long-running programs and regulatory framework. How does this framework interact with existing utility rate structures and regulatory models? Is it working within the system or totally disrupting it?
6. As states pull back on efficiency funding, some are also pulling back on the mandates and program infrastructure that made EE delivery possible. Paula, if

that utility program infrastructure erodes, how hard does it become to execute something like BYODC?

Key Stakeholders

7. In practice, what does collaboration between hyperscalers, utilities, and customers actually look like? Where have we seen good and bad examples that we can reference as we move forward BYODC?
 - a. **Brendan**, if you can talk in more detail about how shaping of Capacity*Connect and then bringing Google into the fold worked, that would be informative here
8. **Ari/Paula**: In talking to utilities about this concept, I've often gotten the question - why would hyperscalers want to do this? How would you answer that question? What does a hyperscaler actually get out of investing in demand-side solutions?
9. Are there hyperscalers already moving in this direction, or is BYODC still largely theoretical at this point?
10. We talk a lot about this effort and how it can drive programs through retail utilities. What about RTOs and ISOs - how are they relevant to the conversation? Where are there barriers and opportunities at the regional level?

Links to Affordability

11. Affordability has to be central to this conversation. Energy costs are already squeezing households, and data center load growth risks pushing rates higher. How does BYODC need to be designed so it's actively reducing bills, not just providing the hyperscaler PR benefits?
 - a. **Brendan**: Sparkfund is a member of the recently-launched Utilize coalition, which aims to attack affordability by using more of the grid that's already been built. Can you talk more about the group and its goals?
12. We've framed this conversation around benefits, but is it realistic to also be concerned that any large-scale corporate investment in residential energy might extract value from communities rather than build it. Are there design elements of BYODC that can ensure that households are genuine beneficiaries?
13. If BYODC programs are opt-in, the households with the most to gain are often the hardest to reach and the least likely to participate. How do we solve that, and who's accountable for solving it?

Looking Ahead

14. What does success look like in five years?
15. Who are the critical intermediaries that need to exist to make this work? Aggregators, community organizations, financiers?

16. If you could change one thing about how utilities, regulators, or hyperscalers are currently approaching this problem what would it be?

Session Flow & Tips:

- A “Voice of God” (VOG) will introduce the moderator to the stage
- Panelists will be introduced by the moderator who will give a brief panel introduction.
- Moderators will typically direct questions to individuals, rather than posing open questions to the group.
- Each theme or topic will likely get ~8–10 minutes, so responses that are clear and concise help keep the pace dynamic.
- We aim to end each session with a strong takeaway—this might include a rapid-fire round of predictions or one key insight from each speaker.
- If time runs out, our stage managers will respectfully stop the discussion and ask that the conversation continue off stage and/or during breaks and networking reception.

Logistics & Preparation

Arrival Time: Plan to check-in at speaker registration by 12:30pm. Speaker Check-In will be located next to Registration in the Cyclorama. Upon entering the venue’s main entrance, both will be immediately on your right-hand side. Once everyone has arrived, you will be led to the theater space.

Time & Format: 40 min; moderated with prepared questions.

Day-Of Contact

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