

Addressing the Impact of Climate Change on Public Health and Natural Disasters



Sponsored by: Congressman Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)
Ranking Member, Committee on Homeland Security

Moderator

Susan Polan, PhD

Susan L. Polan, PhD, is associate executive director for public affairs and advocacy with the American Public Health Association. She oversees the Association's departments of government relations and affiliate affairs, communications and membership. She is responsible for planning and directing APHA's legislative, regulatory and legal activities, communicating those initiatives and Association news to members and the public, and overseeing membership recruitment and retention and Affiliate, Caucus and Section relations. Prior to joining APHA, Polan worked as the director of government relations at the Trust for America's Health, a public health advocacy organization. There, she served as lead staff lobbyist to Congress, federal agencies and the administration on priority issues, including public health infrastructure development, chronic disease prevention and where she advocated for new funding for a nationwide health tracking network. Polan has almost two decades of experience in public health, government relations and associations. She has drafted legislation for Senate consideration on tobacco control and Safe and Drug Free Schools as an American Association for Advancement of Science Congressional science and technology fellow for the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee. She served as director of federal government relations at the American Cancer Society and as president and senior advisor of Partnership for Prevention, where she represented the nonprofit to government officials, congressional offices, the Congressional Prevention Coalition and other partners. She has also worked as a health policy consultant whose projects included encouraging an increase in funding for environmental health concerns and grant writing for several health clients. Polan earned her Bachelor of Science degree in psychology from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. She later earned a master's of science degree in health psychology from San Diego State University and a doctorate in social ecology from the University of California, Irvine.

Panelists

Marccus D. Hendricks, Ph.D., MPH, Assistant Professor, Urban Studies and Planning Program, School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, University of Maryland. Dr. Marccus D. Hendricks is an Urban Studies and Planning Assistant Professor in the School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation and a Faculty Research Affiliate with the Center for Disaster Resilience and Environmental Finance Center at the University of Maryland. His primary areas of study are infrastructure planning and management, environmental planning, and hazard mitigation planning. His specialty interests include stormwater infrastructure resilience, social vulnerability to disaster, environmental justice, sustainable development and participatory action. At the intersection of his work he ensures that low-income and communities of color are planned and accounted for in light of environmental hazards and investigates how the inventory, condition, and distribution of public infrastructures can modify hazard exposures and resulting disaster impacts. More specifically, he studies critical infrastructures at the neighborhood-level, such as water systems, public health facilities, emergency services, and streets, roadways, and right-of-ways. He also studies public works and community facilities, including waste management and debris removal, public schools, libraries, and parks. All through an environmental justice lens with the goal of just and fair opportunities for community resilience.

Hendricks is a founding fellow of the William Averette Anderson Fund (the first national interdisciplinary organization working to increase the number of underrepresented persons of color in the field of disaster research, practice, and pedagogy) and currently serves as a board member for the Fund. Hendricks has worked

on research projects related to both public health and disasters, which have been funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Science Foundation. He has complementary professional experience from his time working with the Brazos Valley Texas Council of Governments as a public safety planner and with the Texas A & M Engineering Extension at their Emergency Services Training Institute. Hendricks holds a Ph.D. in Urban and Regional Science and a Master of Public Health, both from Texas A&M University. He completed his undergraduate work at the University of North Texas.

Chelsea L. Gridley-Smith, PhD, Senior Program Analyst Environmental Health, National Association of County & City Health Officials. Dr. Gridley-Smith joined the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) in June 2016 as a Program Analyst for Environmental Health, Pandemic Preparedness & Catastrophic Response. She is currently a Senior Program Analyst for Environmental Health and manages climate change and vector control projects. At NACCHO, Dr. Gridley-Smith ensures successful completion of program activities, supervises programmatic staff, and oversees the completion of project deliverables. She also manages project budgets; develops grant applications; conducts research; presents research findings at national conferences; publishes briefs, reports, and articles; briefs leaders on Capitol Hill; and engages and serves NACCHO's members - local health departments. Prior to joining NACCHO, Dr. Gridley-Smith completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases at the National Institutes of Health. Her research background spans vector biology, vector-borne diseases, virology, human cancer, structural biology, biodefense, and emerging infectious diseases. Dr. Gridley-Smith received her doctorate in Biomedical Sciences from Albany University, State University of New York School of Public Health, located within the Wadsworth Center of the New York State Department of Public Health.

Kristie Trousdale, MPH, Deputy Director, Children's Environmental Health Network

Ms. Trousdale is the Deputy Director of the Children's Environmental Health Network (CEHN), where she provides organizational leadership and development. She leads CEHN's Science Committee and the Network's science translation and education projects, research conferences, communications and marketing, program training activities, and advocacy efforts. Ms. Trousdale has over seven years of experience developing curriculum and other educational resources for CEHN's Eco-Healthy Child Care® program, and served as Co-Editor of "Putting it into Practice" a pediatric environmental health training resource for health care faculty. She received a B.S. in Sociology and Environmental Science from Willamette University and a MPH in Environmental Health from the University of Maryland.

Carmen Orozco-Acosta, Ph.D., Senior Policy Advisor, US Domestic Program, Oxfam America

Dr. Carmen Orozco-Acosta is the Senior Policy Advisor, Puerto Rico Program, for the U.S. Domestic Program at Oxfam America. She is the policy lead on Puerto Rico, developing advocacy priorities and strategy focused on disaster relief and recovery after Hurricanes Irma and Maria. Through her work with local partners, she is helping to raise the profile of Puerto Rico to seek a just recovery for the island. Previously she has served as the Senior Program Coordinator at the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA), where she worked with a coalition of 40 national Latino organizations on policy and advocacy. She also managed NHLA programs focused on increasing the representation of Latinas in elected office and supporting Latinos in pursuing political appointments. She has worked on Capitol Hill as a Legislative Assistant for Congressman Doggett who represents her hometown in Texas, and Congresswoman Bass from California. Carmen began her career with a passion for public service from an early age. She completed her Ph.D. at the University of Notre Dame in the Department of Political Science, where she specialized in race, ethnicity, and politics in the United States. Her primary focus is on African-American and Latino politics. She researches the causes of inequality, civil rights policy, Black and Latino political development, organizational development, and coalition building. A proud Colombian-Mexican-American, she has always been active in her community, organizing in the regions where she has lived. She led Latino outreach efforts in northern Indiana during then Senator Obama's 2008 Presidential Campaign and has worked as a community organizer with numerous local and volunteer organizations over the years. Carmen is passionate about increasing the representation of underserved communities in policy development and in political office, fighting for civil rights, and ultimately striving for equity and racial justice.



Dara Alpert Lieberman

Dara Alpert Lieberman is Senior Government Relations Manager at Trust for America's Health. She works with the Director of Government Relations to advance TFAH's agenda with federal, state, and local governments. At TFAH, Ms. Lieberman leads the organization's advocacy around infectious disease prevention, disease surveillance, and strengthening the nation's public health emergency preparedness and response capabilities. Ms. Lieberman previously served as a legislative representative for American Counseling Association, where she advocated for mental health access issues. In recent years, Ms. Lieberman has also worked on children's health care access for the Children's Defense Fund and served as a staff member for the Senate Committee on Armed Services. In addition to working directly with policymakers, she has organized grassroots advocacy efforts at the national and state level. She secured an MPP from the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan. She graduated magna cum laude with a BA in Public Policy Studies from Duke University. Ms. Lieberman currently serves on the board of Healthcare Ready, a nonprofit that works to protect patient access to healthcare in the face of disaster through collaboration with public health and healthcare.