

2026 DTSC Joint Oversight Hearing Witness Biographies

Panel 1: Perspectives of the Board of Environmental Safety

Dawn Koepke



McHugh Koepke Padron on behalf of the California Council for Environmental & Economic Balance (CCEEB)

Dawn Koepke is a legislative, budget, and regulatory lobbyist and partner at McHugh Koepke Padron. She manages the research strategy development, coalition building, and lobbying needs of the firm's clients in the policy areas of natural resources, environmental safety, chemical management, hazardous waste, permitting, recycling, public safety, health and human services, and education. Dawn also serves as co-chair for the Green Chemistry Alliance. Dawn has a master's degree in public policy and administration from California State University, Sacramento and a bachelor's degree in international relations from San Francisco State University.

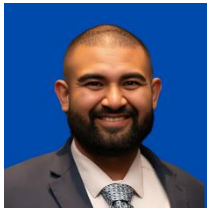
Angela Johnson Meszaros



Senior Attorney, Community Partnerships Program, Earthjustice

Angela has spent over 30 years working in the Los Angeles region to stop health and environmental harms caused by hazardous waste. Angela's work involves campaigns incorporating legal, legislative, and communications tools in partnership with front-line community leaders. Angela has served communities in various roles including in the Environmental Justice Advisory Committee for the Implementation of AB 32, the California League of Conservation Voters Education Fund, and at the University of Southern California's Sustainable Cities Program. Angela holds both a bachelor's degree in philosophy and a JD from the University of Southern California.

Miguel Alatorre Jr.



Executive Director, UNIDOS Network

Miguel Alatorre Jr. is the Executive Director of UNIDOS Network, a 501(c)(3) community-based environmental justice organization headquartered in Kettleman City, California, serving farmworker and other underserved communities across the San Joaquin Valley. Under his leadership, UNIDOS advances air quality, environmental health, and community protection through direct advocacy, resident engagement, and coalition building. He is President of El Pueblo Para el Aire y Agua Limpia de Kettleman City, the grassroots organization that has represented residents living alongside one of the largest hazardous waste facilities in the western United States for decades. He also serves on the Department of Toxic Substances Control's Environmental Justice Advisory Committee (EJAC), giving him direct engagement with the agency's environmental justice work. Miguel's additional leadership includes serving as President of the Board of Fossil Free California, President of the Kettleman City Foundation, and Planning Commissioner for District 2 of Kings County. He also contributes to statewide and regional air quality efforts, including the California Air Resources Board's community air protection program and the Central Valley Air Quality Coalition. Across these roles, Miguel brings technical knowledge, governance experience, and firsthand perspective from a community that has long carried a disproportionate share of California's toxic and environmental burdens.

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Panel 2: Updates from the Newsom Administration on DTSC Reform



Katherine Butler, MPH

Director of DTSC

Katherine Butler, MPH is a seasoned leader who upholds her commitment to strong enforcement, transparent government, and collaborative solutions for DTSC's decision making to protect California's environment and communities. For nearly two years, Katherine served as Deputy Director of the Hazardous Waste Management Program. In that role, she created a solution-oriented culture that led to action on several of the most complex long-standing permitting decisions facing the department. Prior to joining DTSC, Katherine was the Senior Health Deputy in the Office of County Supervisor Janice Hahn. During the most challenging years of the COVID-19 pandemic, she served as the Personal Protective Equipment Lead for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.



Andrew Rakestraw, J.D.

Chair of the Board of Environmental Safety

Andrew Rakestraw has dedicated himself to a career in public service, and using law, science, and policy to tackle the most challenging environmental problems while protecting the most vulnerable communities. Andrew earned his JD from the University of California College of the Law, San Francisco, and worked in several sectors of the Federal Government. He served in the U.S. Department of State, the Department of State Office of the Legal Adviser, and in the Office of Special Presidential Envoy for Climate under John Kerry. In these roles, Andrew partnered with other countries, NGOs, and industry to advance climate ambition and environmental justice.