

Rural Beacon Initiative Founder and CEO William Barber III Joins Board of Renewable Energy Farmers of America

Durham, North Carolina Feb 4, 2026 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.IssueWire.com)) - Rural Beacon Initiative (RBI) is proud to announce that its Founder and CEO, William Barber III, has been appointed to the Board of Directors for [Renewable Energy Farmers of America \(REFA\)](https://www.renewableenergyfarmers.org), joining a coalition of farmers, landowners, and advocates working to expand access to clean energy through inclusive, community-driven solutions.

As a nationally recognized voice for environmental and economic justice, Barber brings deep expertise in equity-centered climate strategy, rural development, and renewable energy deployment. Through RBI, he leads a team focused on reshaping rural economies through regenerative agriculture, energy justice, and community ownership.

“I’m thrilled to have William serve on REFA’s Board of Directors,” said Jeff Risley, Executive Director of REFA. “His mix of experiences is incredible and perfectly suited for us—landowner, renewable energy expert, legal scholar, and business owner. He will be a valuable resource for our team and our members.”

Barber joins REFA’s board alongside a growing network of movement-aligned leaders, including Tom Murphy (President), Pete Ferrell (Vice President), Greg Brophy (Secretary & Treasurer), Wayne Greier, Shelly Mueller, Neil Shaffer, Derrick Worden, and Brian Kuehl (Ex-Officio). Together, this diverse group of landowners, professionals, and clean energy advocates reflects REFA’s commitment to building a collaborative, community-first approach to renewable energy access and rural prosperity.

“I’m honored to join this board and be in community with others who share a vision for what’s possible,” said Barber. “We need to build an energy future that is collaborative, rooted in justice, and led by the people who’ve long been closest to the land. That’s how we shift power in every sense of the word.”

William’s appointment reflects a growing national movement to democratize clean energy access and ensure that rural and BIPOC communities remain active participants in shaping the clean energy economy.

For more about Rural Beacon Initiative, visit www.ruralbeaconinitiative.com.

To learn more about Renewable Energy Farmers of America, visit www.renewableenergyfarmers.org.

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