

WVU Energy Conference to focus on coal state transitions

MORGANTOWN, WEST VIRGINIA — The [fifth annual national energy conference](#) at [West Virginia University](#) will focus on the impacts of the global energy transition on coal communities in the state and Central Appalachia.

For generations, West Virginia has been closely linked to its mainstay economic drivers such as coal. With sharp declines in coal production, however, there is a pressing need to both continue to diversify the state's economy and step up to protect West Virginia's most significantly impacted communities. While a few national policymakers are beginning to recognize the need for addressing the devastating impacts being borne by coal communities arising from global energy transitions, more work is needed. West Virginia's needs must be central in these discussions to help shape the policy response and strategies. This conference will begin to examine the effect of trends in the coal industry, the economy-wide repercussions within Central Appalachia, and possible solutions for West Virginia that would put the state and its people on our most resilient path forward.

Former Senator Jay Rockefeller (D.-W.Va.) will be the keynote speaker at the conference, which is co-sponsored by the Rockefeller School of Policy and Politics. "It is time to take an open, honest look at the seismic transitions we face, and decide how we will take control of our future," said Senator Rockefeller. "We can and must both protect the needs of our coal reliant communities and build a resilient economy while we reduce our carbon footprint globally." The conference will look at the convergence of energy and environmental policies and their impact on West Virginia's citizens. The conference takes place on Friday, April 8, at the WVU College of Law, and is co-sponsored by the College of Law's Center for Energy and Sustainable Development.

Joining Senator Rockefeller as speakers at the conference are Charles Patton, President and C.O.O of Appalachian Power; Mike Gerrard, Director of Columbia Law School's Sabin Center for Climate Change Law; Adele Morris, Senior Fellow and Policy Director for the Climate and Energy Economics Project at the Brookings Institution; Trevor Houser, Energy Policy Advisor, Hillary for America; Keith Burdette, Cabinet Secretary, West Virginia Department of Commerce; and John Deskins, Director of WVU's Bureau of Business and Economic Research. Other organizations represented at the conference include World Resources Institute, the Rockefeller Family Fund, Benedum Foundation, Rural Policy Research Institute, Coalfield Development Corporation, Eastern Kentucky

Concentrated Employment Program, and the law firms of Jackson Kelly PLLC represented by Kelley Goes and Bowles Rice, by Tom Heywood.

“The global energy transition is driving changes in our economies, energy resources, regulations and world market forces that compel us to think about new opportunities and new challenges for West Virginia,” said Jamie Van Nostrand, Director of the Center for Energy and Sustainable Development. “Our families, community leaders, state agencies, non-profit organizations and federal delegation are all confronted with unprecedented changes that will require us to collectively contribute to building well-crafted solutions and charting a smart course ahead. This conference will examine where we are and where we want to be as we move forward.”

The public is invited to attend the conference and admission is free. Registration, however, is required for the lunch. For more information about the conference and to register, please go to the conference [website](#).

About the Rockefeller School of Policy and Politics

The John D. Rockefeller IV School of Policy and Politics is the only multi-disciplinary, degree granting policy school linked to a robust political archives collection in the country. By formally linking the departments of Political Science and Public Administration and the degree programs in International Studies, Leadership Studies, and Legal Studies, we provide students with a top-quality education in these fields; produce cutting-edge research with important prescriptive implications; and work with partners in the university community and government offices to support the creation of wise public policies that will improve the quality of life for West Virginians and people around the world.

About the Center for Energy and Sustainable Development

Founded in 2011, the Center for Energy and Sustainable Development at the WVU College of Law was created to conduct objective, unbiased research and policy analyses; provide a forum for issues to be explored by stakeholders; and to promote policies that strike a balance between the development of energy resources and protection of the valuable air and water supplies upon which future generations will depend. The Center’s first two national energy conferences explored the challenges of balancing environmental preservation and economic profitability in the development of shale gas resources. The 2014 conference examined the impacts of the Environmental Protection Agency’s rules regulating greenhouse gas emissions from power plants on the coal-dependent regions of the country, while last year’s conference focused on the

intersection of water and energy and the implications of water protection on energy production.

Webcasts

[Morning Session](#) [John D. Rockefeller](#) [Afternoon Session](#)

Conference Press

- [WV ALWAYS](#)
- [The Dominion Post](#)
- [The Register-Herald](#)
- [FrackCheck WV](#)
- [WDTV News](#)