

[From the Jackson Free Press](#)

Fossil-fuel energy development in the U.S. is under assault, and actress Daryl Hannah and President Barack Obama are leading it. Or at least that's the vision laid out at this morning's Governor's Energy Summit organized by the Mississippi Energy Institute and the Mississippi Development Authority.

Billed by Gov. Phil Bryant as part of "an aggressive effort to attract energy jobs and investment" to the state, the daylong summit is taking place at the Jackson Convention Center Complex.

Although the logo for the summit incorporated the color green and a spectrum of energy industry symbols, including solar panels, energy-efficient light bulbs, wind turbines and coal-fired power plants, the "Energy and the Economy" panel was mainly a vehicle to promote fossil fuels and attack the Obama administration's pro-environment energy policies.

Karen Harbert, president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Institute for 21st Century Energy, said energy development is contributing to a national "manufacturing renaissance." Harbert gave a cursory nod to nurturing America's "abundant resources from the sun to the bottom of the ocean." She mostly complained about the regulatory environment that is prompting utility companies to take coal plants offline while China continues to build an average of one coal-powered plant per week.

"We think we are energy poor. We need a paradigm shift. We are energy rich," Harbert said in her remarks.

David Holt, president of the Consumer Energy Alliance, criticized Republican and Democratic administrations for letting politics get in the way of developing a long-range robust energy plan.

"It's time to stop debating energy and start producing energy," he said, offering a pointed

critique of the Obama administration's decision to block the Keystone pipeline project, which would deliver oil from Canada to Texas.

He blamed an "opposition group" consisting of B-List entertainers--including Daryl Hannah--that staged a sit-in at the White House last year to protest the controversial project.

Harry Alford, president of the National Black Chamber of Commerce, characterized the Environmental Protection Agency as a "monster" created by former President Richard Nixon and that led to "poppycock" claims of environmental racism.

Alford suggested that the only way to change the trajectory of America's energy policy would be to have a change of leadership in the White House, a line that drew applause from the audience.