

Mahoney Hosts Biofuel Conference with Business, Education Leaders

Congressman & Leaders Discuss Impacts of Florida's Emerging Ethanol Industry

(Friday, March 7, 2008)

(Loxahatchee, FL) - Congressman Tim Mahoney (FL-16) joined local education and business stakeholders today to discuss the impact and job growth associated with the alternative energy industry that is coming to South and Southwest Florida. Congressman Mahoney discussed the Energy and Energy Conservation Tax Act (H.R. 5351), which he spoke in support of on the House of Representatives floor last week before its passage through the House.

"This Congress has finally stepped up to foreign oil by pushing through responsible energy legislation. I am proud that my work on the Farm and Energy bills lays the foundation for South Florida to become the biofuel capital of our nation. Cellulosic ethanol will give new opportunity for our rural communities who suffer from high unemployment and high school drop out rates that approach 40 percent. This new "green" industry will generate thousands of high paying jobs, expand our economy away from construction and attract new research and development centers along our coasts," said Congressman Mahoney.

Congressman Mahoney was joined by the University of Florida, Dr. George Philipiddis, Associate Director of the Applied Research Center (ARC) and Co-Director of the Energy Business Forum (EBF) at FIU and Dr. Karl Stevens, FAU Dean of the College of Engineering and Computer Science.

"To make our State a frontrunner in cellulosic ethanol, FIU has formed a public-private partnership with Florida Crystals Corporation, the country's largest biomass renewable energy generator, to produce ethanol from Florida's plentiful agricultural residues, such as sugarcane stalks and wood waste," said Dr. George Philippidis. "In addition to cutting-edge ethanol research, FIU is committed to preparing its students to become the future leaders of this new technology, assisting the US private sector to test their biofuel technologies and move them into the marketplace, and educating the public about biofuels."

Congressman Mahoney was also joined by local business leaders, including leaders of the Palms West Chamber of Commerce and Florida Public Utilities.

"The Palms West Chamber of Commerce is very excited about the opportunity to add a new industry and associated jobs to the offerings in the Western communities - especially one that is so in tune with the 'green' movement sweeping the nation," said Jaene Miranda, President of Palms West Chamber of Commerce.

The Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Tax Act would amend the Internal Revenue Code by allowing tax cuts for biofuels that will decrease dependence on foreign oil and lower gas prices.

Since taking office, Mahoney has worked with private industry to develop a cellulosic ethanol industry in Florida. In the past year, four new businesses have been announced to build cellulosic ethanol plants in Mahoney's district.

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