

TEMPE - U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell today toured three local businesses to identify firsthand some of the innovations and technologies that are creating green-collar jobs in Arizona while promoting the use of clean energy. Each of the businesses is seeking to leverage funding from the economic stimulus package to make investments in clean energy projects that are creating green-collar jobs.

At each stop, Mitchell discussed the impact of the economic stimulus package on clean energy and the steps needed to build a green economy and create jobs at home in Arizona.

"With more sun than anywhere else, we have a great opportunity here in Arizona to be a leader in solar technology, clean energy, and sustainability," Mitchell said. "The alternative energy sources that can help meet our increasing energy needs are literally right here in our backyard. By investing in clean energy, we can create new green-collar jobs and help jumpstart our economy.

Each stop showcased different aspects of clean energy use and production.

American Solar demonstrated its training and installation process for solar panels at its solar panel housing facility. At First Solar, the world's largest manufacturer of thin film solar panels, representatives from the business discussed how the development of clean energy technologies like solar have the potential to create hundreds of thousands of jobs nationally. Finally, Mitchell met representatives from Clean Energy to tour the East Valley Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility (EVBOM) to discuss the partnership among Scottsdale, Tempe, and Valley Metro. The cities are transferring to Compressed Natural Gas and reducing their overall carbon footprint by up to 23%. They are retraining their employees to become green collar workers by transferring their skills to new, cleaner, greener vehicles.

Businesses like these in Arizona and across the nation have opportunities to take advantage of investments from the stimulus package to grow and create jobs. Energy provisions in the stimulus are designed to ensure that a tough economy and a credit crisis do not slow down energy research and development or the large-scale use of clean energy technologies like solar. They will create more than 500,000 jobs nationwide and has the potential to bring thousands of jobs and millions of dollars of investments to Arizona. Mitchell voted for the Recovery Act, also known as the stimulus bill, which passed Congress and was signed by

President Obama in February.

The tour comes one day before Mitchell's Sustainability Town Hall Meeting: Green Jobs Today for a Strong Economy Tomorrow. On Thursday, April 9, Mitchell will bring together energy experts from Arizona State University, small businesses, economists and utility regulators for his third town hall forum addressing sustainability at ASU's SkySong in Scottsdale.