

*Energy experts, local officials, business leaders focus on green-collar jobs, clean energy economy*

SCOTTSDALE - At a town hall meeting he hosted today, U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell encouraged Arizona universities, local governments and businesses to pursue funding from the economic stimulus package to help spur innovation, grow our state's economy and increase energy independence.

The town hall meeting: Green Jobs Today for a Strong Economy Tomorrow included energy experts from Arizona State University, small businesses, economists and utility regulators. The forum addressed sustainability issues and steps we can take to create green-collar jobs. The panel, moderated by Mesa Republic Editor John D'Anna, focused on how investments in clean energy today are creating jobs already, and how they can help to build Arizona's infrastructure and strengthen Arizona's state economy in the and long term.

"Building a sustainable economy and investing in green jobs today is key to providing for Arizona's future needs," Mitchell said. "With the burgeoning solar technology industry, Arizona is ready to emerge as a leader in sustainable energy. The experts who joined me today have provided valuable insight on what resources are needed to continue the important work that has already begun. The economic stimulus package passed earlier this year can provide valuable funding to help Arizona lead in clean energy production."

The energy provisions in the stimulus package will ensure that a tough economy and credit crisis do not slow down energy research and development or the large-scale use of clean energy technologies like solar. It will create more than 500,000 green jobs nationwide and has the potential to bring thousands of jobs and millions of dollars in investments to Arizona.

Today's Sustainability Town Hall is the third that Mitchell has held since taking office in 2007. Mitchell hosted his first Sustainability Town Hall in September, 2007, which focused on strategies for businesses, universities and cities to reduce their carbon footprint. He held a second Sustainability Town Hall in June, 2008, which focused on how clean, renewable energy can boost Arizona's economy, clean our environment, and strengthen America's national security. Today's town hall comes one day after Mitchell conducted a Green Collar Jobs Tour, visiting three local businesses that are creating jobs while contributing to a greener, more

sustainable economy.

Last Congress, Mitchell was a strong advocate of extending the solar investment tax credit.