

Feb. 8, 2008

Lovins and Polyzoides added to 'Get EmPowered' energy symposium Feb. 22

Two of the country's most influential authorities on energy conservation and land use have joined an already impressive roster of speakers for *Get EmPowered*, the renewable and alternative energy symposium being held from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday, Feb. 22, at New College of Florida's Sudakoff Center, 5800 Bay Shore Road, Sarasota. Amory Lovins, Chairman, Chief scientist and Co-founder of Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI), will deliver the keynote address, and Stephanos Polyzoides, Co-founder of the Congress for the New Urbanism, will address land use and its role in energy conservation.

Lovins advises governments and major firms worldwide on advanced energy and resource efficiency. and has led the technical redesign of \$30 billion worth of facilities to achieve energy savings at typically lower capital cost. To drive home the point of minimizing greenhouse gas emissions, Lovins will appear at the symposium via a live, interactive teleconference.

Polyzoides' Congress for the New Urbanism is a national association of more than 3,000 architects, planners, engineers, developers, government officials and environmentalists who work to restore existing urban centers, reconfigure suburbs, and protect nature by integrating it into the built environment. He a popular speaker on the subjects of new urbanism, transit-oriented development, mixed-use development, housing and sustainability.

The caliber of speakers for this event is no surprise to Sarasota County Commission Chair Shannon Staub. "I think it's a reflection of just how closely Sarasota's own energy initiatives are tied to the executive orders that Gov. Crist signed last summer to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase energy efficiency, and position Florida as a hub of innovation to develop and commercialize green energy technologies," Staub said.

Lovins and Polyzoides will frame the discussion for three panels on the roles that government, businesses and the community play in reducing U.S. greenhouse gas emissions and increasing energy efficiency and security. Florida Department of Environmental Protection Sec. Michael Sole, State Sen. Mike Bennett, Congressman Vern Buchanan and State Rep. Keith Fitzgerald will be among those discussing how to craft meaningful energy legislation.

"The quest for renewal energy is not necessarily about us," Bennett said. "It is more about your children and their children. It is about our young soldiers dying in the sands of Iraq and Afghanistan and the billions of dollars being paid for foreign oil. It is about how the warming of our planet will affect your grandchildren."

Bennett chairs the Senate Communications and Public Utilities Committee, which has primary jurisdiction for energy policy in the Senate. Under his leadership, the committee has made renewable energy a primary focus.

Fitzgerald has sponsored legislation that would promote renewable energy generation and net metering to provide incentives for more widespread utilization of renewable energy by residents, local governments and businesses. He also sits on the House Environmental Protection Committee.

Buchanan helped pass the bipartisan "Renewable Fuels, Consumer Protection, and Energy Efficiency Act," which increases fuel efficiency standards by 40 percent, requires the use and development of renewable energy and biofuels, and reduces carbon dioxide emissions that scientists say contribute to global warming.

Sole is Chairman of Gov. Charlie Crist's 21-member action team on energy and climate change.

Get EmPowered 2008 is being organized by Sarasota County and New College of Florida and is presented with support from sponsoring agencies and businesses. Registration is \$50 and includes a continental breakfast and lunch.

For more information about the event, or to learn about sponsorship or exhibition opportunities, contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000 and ask for the *Get EmPowered* energy symposium, or visit www.scgov.net/getempowered.