

Lockyer offers green measures at Corona event

The Press-Enterprise

Aug. 17, 2007

By Melanie Johnson

State Treasurer Bill Lockyer on Thursday night unveiled proposed measures he hopes will put California at the forefront of the fight against global warming.

Lockyer spoke at a symposium hosted by the Green Institute for Village Empowerment held at the Krikorian Theater at Dos Lagos.

The former California attorney general said he plans to push for a \$5 million bond measure to fund environmental projects that will conserve energy and also save taxpayer money.

If approved by state legislators, Lockyer said he would like to see the bond measure on the November ballot.

The initiative calls for \$3.5 million to be dedicated to converting all state buildings, including government offices, prisons and universities to solar power. About \$600 million would go to retrofitting state buildings to improve energy emissions and around \$900,000 would be slated for biofuel and other renewable technology, he said.

If the bond moves forward, it would be the largest investment in renewable energy in the nation and would save the state almost 200 million megawatts of energy a year, he said.

The state spends about \$525 million each year for energy use, not counting the Department of Water and Power, he said.

“California should be leaders in developing these solutions,” he said. “I think our creative genius can be harnessed to tackle environmental and global warming challenges.”

Lockyer said the existence of global warming is “almost indisputable” at this point and he urged those who doubt it to consider energy conservation policies as a sort of insurance for the probability that it could be an issue that needs to be addressed.

He also said he would like to run a carbon trading program, if approved by legislators, that would involve collecting carbon units from reduced emissions and selling them or trading them to help fund environmental projects.

Ali Sahabi, founder of the institute, used the symposium to present Lockyer with the first Green Valley Circle Award for his push for environmental policies.

Sahabi also discussed the Green Valley Initiative, a regional effort to make the Inland Empire the hub of the growing energy renewal industry and promote green technology and policies.

The rapid growth has brought pollution and other environmental woes, he said.

“The imbalance of populations and employment opportunities for this region is the main cause of many of the problems we have in the Inland Empire,” he said.

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