

## Obama gives Portland energy investor a convention speech spot

Posted by hestev August 21, 2008 21:37PM



Courtesy of Nth PowerNancy Floyd

A Portland venture capitalist who specializes in green energy investments has been given a coveted primetime speaking slot at next week's Democratic National Convention.

Nancy Floyd, 53, says she's not all that politically active but got a call a few days ago from Sen. Barack Obama's campaign inviting her to address the convention Tuesday night.

"I get four minutes," Floyd said.

She plans to use it to underscore the burgeoning field of wind and solar power -- \$100 billion in worldwide investments last year alone -- and how the United States could miss out on millions of jobs if it fails to jump aboard.

"We have an industry of historic proportions that is still in its nascent years but growing very rapidly," Floyd said. Other nations are starting to invest heavily in renewable energy sources, but the United States has been slow in coming around.

"If we don't do the same, we will not get those jobs," Floyd said. "We will not attract that investment capital. That's the main message."

Floyd is the founder and managing director of Nth Power, a venture capital firm that puts money into wind power, solar energy and biofuel company startups. The firm, with \$420 million under its management, is based in San Francisco, but Floyd works mainly out of her home in Portland's West Hills. She commutes to California weekly.

Her niche follows the direction Gov. Ted Kulongoski wants to take Oregon. The governor has cited renewable and alternative energy as the best source of new jobs and economic growth in the state. He has helped push through generous state tax breaks to encourage green energy businesses to set up shop here.

Floyd's speech at the convention will bring even more attention to the issue -- and to the state, Kulongoski said.

"It's a great opportunity to have Oregon showcased on a national stage," said the governor, who won't attend the convention because of schedule concerns.

Floyd says she's scheduled to speak somewhere between 6 and 6:30 p.m. Pacific Time. Her speech comes shortly before Sen. Hillary Clinton takes the stage.

She says the campaign has assigned her a speechwriter and a manager. She speaks regularly at industry conventions, but her biggest audience to date is about 1,000 -- "nothing quite as big as the convention."

Energy has become a flashpoint in the presidential race. Republican candidate Sen. John McCain has come out strongly in favor of new offshore oil drilling as a way to boost U.S. supplies. Obama favors using existing oil leases and more efforts on conservation and renewables.

Sahar Wali, spokeswoman for the Obama campaign, said Floyd was chosen to speak because of her 30 years experience in the renewable energy industry.

"Floyd is an entrepreneur who will speak to this issue critical to our national security," Wali said. Diversifying energy sources is key to Obama's plan "to break our dependence on foreign oil and provide relief to American families struggling to deal with the energy crisis."

-- Harry Esteve; [harryestev@news.oregonian.com](mailto:harryestev@news.oregonian.com)

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