

Minner joins governors' conference (The News Journal)

National meeting to discuss renewable energy

By GINGER GIBSON

The News Journal

July 12 ,2008

Renewable energy will be the main topic of a gathering of the nation's governors in Philadelphia this weekend that will include Gov. Ruth Ann Minner and U.S. Rep. Mike Castle, a former governor.

The National Governor's Association is hosting its annual conference in the City of Brotherly Love this year, and about 70 current and former governors will be convening to discuss policy issues. The conference began Friday and will last until Monday, with former President Clinton delivering the keynote address this afternoon.

The NGA is a bipartisan association of state governors that meets twice a year to make policy recommendations to the federal government and share ideas about governing on a state level.

Kate Bailey, Minner's spokeswoman, said the governor, who is approaching her final months in office, plans on participating in the discussions to both share information about progress Delaware has made and learn from the steps taken in other states.

"It's going to focus mainly on clean energy, which as you may know, our governor is a fan of," Bailey said.

The NGA awarded a grant to Delaware and 11 other states in June to pursue clean energy initiatives. Bailey said the \$50,000 will advance programs taking place in the state, and Minner will share news about state efforts at the conference.

Minner is also the co-chairwoman of the NGA's Homeland Security Committee, Bailey said, and she will be participating

in discussions regarding those topics.

The governor will be staying in Philadelphia for the duration of the conference, and Bailey said she would be unable to provide a total price tag for registration and lodging until after the conference.

Castle said he was invited to the conference as part of the 100th anniversary of the NGA. The organization invited all of the former governors who have participated in the conference over the years.

Part of the group's goal is to mediate between state and federal governments, and Castle said he will be able to assist in that goal because he is interested in several of the topics, including renewable energy.

"It's helpful to sit in on a session such as this and carry it back to Washington to see if there is anything we can do," Castle said.

The list of attendees includes most of the governors and several former governors from across the country -- including one former president and several people rumored to be vice presidential candidates.

Clinton will speak today and will participate in a discussion moderated by Cokie Roberts.

Also slated to attend are rumored vice presidential candidates Democrats Janet Napolitano of Arizona, Kathleen Sebelius of Kansas, Brian Schweitzer of Montana and Tim Kaine of Virginia. On the Republican side, Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal will be in attendance and has been rumored to be a possible running mate for Sen. John McCain.

None of the nominees is planning to stop at the conference, and a few well known governors and former governors will also be missing, including Florida's Charlie Crist, Ohio's Ted Strickland, New Mexico's Bill Richardson and California's Arnold Schwarzenegger, who is dealing with wildfires in his home state. Former governors and presidential hopefuls Mike Huckabee and Mitt Romney will also not be in attendance.

The primary theme of the meetings will be renewable energy, said Christopher Cashman, a spokesman for the NGA. The current chairman of the NGA, Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty has named the NGA initiative "Securing a Clean Energy Future" and some members hope to draft a consensus letter to send to the federal government as a result of the discussions.

The panel discussions will focus on emerging technologies that are ready for the marketplace in the short term and long term for alternative fuels and electricity generation, Cashman said.

The weekend's schedule includes several other topics, including panel discussions on the economic crunch, public education and helping troops who return from war to re-enter society.

On Sunday, Minner is slated to co-host a town hall meeting with four other Democratic female governors, including Napolitano and Sebelius. They'll meet with Pennsylvania middle-class families to stump for Sen. Barack Obama, discussing economic challenges and the Democratic presidential candidate's plans to address them.

When the weekend is over, Republican Pawlenty will hand over the leadership of the organization to Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell who will organize the primary topic for next year. The last Delaware governor to oversee the organization was Tom Carper, now a U.S. senator, who chose education reform as his initiative.

```
if (!window.print) {  
document.write('
```

To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

```
');  
} else { window.print(); }
```

```
if(typeof gcion_enable_bt != 'undefined') {  
if(gcion_enable_bt) {  
document.writeln('
```

```
');  
}  
}
```