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Pelosi Impressed With "Green" Efforts For DNC

DENVER (AP) — House Speaker Nancy Pelosi was in Denver on Monday to tout the latest "greening" initiative in the run-up to the Democratic National Convention: a competition among state delegates to offset their carbon use as they travel here for the convention in August.

The California Democrat and convention chair complimented efforts in Denver and across Colorado to push environmentally sustainable energy use.

"Energy security is a national security issue," Pelosi told reporters at the Pepsi Center, site of the convention. "It is an environmental issue, a health issue ... and it is a moral responsibility. We believe that this planet is God's creation, and we have a moral responsibility to protect it and this initiative does just that."

The committee organizing the convention has pledged to hold the most environmentally sustainable party convention in history. The group has a "director of greening" who previously monitored sustainability for Al Gore's concert series Live Aid. The committee also was the driving force behind owners at the Pepsi Center deciding to offset the energy it uses in a year.

Recalling her own experience organizing the 1984 Democratic convention, Pelosi said she was impressed the committee has found time to work on sustainability.

"It's a pretty exciting day," she said. "I have never seen a convention where the values of the American people have been the overarching concern" for the convention.

Mayor John Hickenlooper and Gov. Bill Ritter each stressed that the sustainability efforts were not just a publicity stunt.

"It's not about the PR," Hickenlooper said. "What we are doing is creating a legacy for the city of Denver that will bring benefit to our businesses and our citizens long after the convention has left."

Ritter said the initiative goes beyond politics.

"It's a statement of great substance that is about the future of this country," he said. "It's not a political statement when the Pepsi Center -- when Kroenke Sports (owner of the Pepsi Center and owned by reliable Republican contributor Stan Kroenke) -- when they look at this and say we want to be the first sports facility in the United States of America to be fully green. They understand that that is the way we must think about the future."

Convention committee CEO Leah Daughtry said Monday's announcement was one in a series of initiatives the committee plans to launch this month before Earth Day on April 22.