



Obama pushes for 'green' jobs

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NATIONAL CITY, Calif. -- With the U.S. bleeding jobs, President Barack Obama is attempting to breathe life back into the American workforce through spending on green power.

"I will invest \$15 billion a year in renewable sources of energy to create 5 million new jobs over the next decade," Obama said. "Jobs that pay well and can't be outsourced."

"The truth is, the manufacturing jobs can be outsourced and they have been outsourced," said Scott Paul of the Alliance for American Manufacturing.

While installation and maintenance of green power facilities and transmission lines are, by nature, impossible to outsource, the reality is that wind power components are mostly made in Europe while photovoltaic panels for the solar industry are built in the Philippines, Malaysia and China.

"A lot of these technologies were developed in the United States," Paul said. "They're being deployed in the United States, but they're being made elsewhere."

U.S. manufacturers tried to insert a "buy American" clause into the stimulus bill to keep more green energy jobs here, but failed.

One U.S. company that has jumped into renewable energy is Knight & Carver of San Diego. Once a boat builder, the company began fabricating wind turbine blades 18 months ago. Since then, its workforce has grown from 50 to 250 employees.

"There's no doubt in my mind that we will see more green jobs here, more manufacturing jobs here," said Sam Brown of Knight & Carver. "All of the business fundamentals mitigate in favor of that happening."

But meeting the president's goal of 5 million new jobs will be difficult with 70-80 percent of all wind and solar jobs in the manufacturing phase, not installation or operation.

Without a change in policy to get American manufacturers into the mix, billions of American tax dollars will be going offshore, stimulating foreign economies instead of our own.