

**COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**HEARING**

**The Department of Energy Fiscal Year 2009 Research and Development Budget  
Proposal**

March 5, 2008

**Statement of Subcommittee on Energy & Environment Ranking Member Bob Inglis  
(SC-4)**

Thank you Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank our witnesses from the Department of Energy (DOE), the Government Accountability Office (GAO), and the American Physical Society for appearing here today to discuss funding for vital research and development projects.

After looking over the Administration's FY2009 DOE Budget proposal, I find myself in agreement with the two points Mr. Beinenstock made in his submitted testimony: (1) the FY08 Omnibus significantly damaged DOE funding and DOE is now scrambling to recover (2) It's not a good idea to cut funding for the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.

Mr. Gaffigan from GAO will tell us that our investments in alternatives to oil are nowhere near what they were following the energy crisis in the 1970s. I wonder if that's because we don't believe we're coming up on an energy crisis of our own in this century, or if it's just that we're ignoring it? I'm disappointed to see that this budget proposal cuts away at hydrogen, solar and nuclear energy alternatives that can create new industry, new jobs, and a better climate.

Last year, about this time, I asked Andy Karsner for assurance that the final year of the President's Hydrogen Fuel Initiative did not mark the end of our commitment to hydrogen research and development. Mr. Karsner assured me that while the Hydrogen Fuel Initiative was coming to a close, it didn't mark "the end of the Hydrogen Program and its robust future that [DOE] expects to continue growing to meet its technological readiness milestones which are necessary over the next decade." Today, DOE will suggest that we cut \$64.9 million from the Hydrogen Program.

Such a reduction would suspend applied research on renewable hydrogen and delay the advent of a hydrogen future. If enacted, this funding decrease would mean closure of laboratories dedicated to renewable hydrogen projects and a subsequent loss in the valuable momentum and research.

The Department of Energy can help lead this country to energy security. American ingenuity, venture capitalists, and industry are ready to join in this effort. I hope that we can find agreement that breaking free of oil requires great goals and great commitments. This budget should embody those goals and empower those commitments.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back.