



Committee Reports for the 108th Congress

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House Rpt.108-554 - ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2005

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RENEWABLE ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES

Renewable Energy Technologies include biomass and biorefinery systems R&D, geothermal technology, hydrogen technology, hydropower, solar energy, and wind energy.

Biomass and Biorefinery Systems R&D.--The Committee recommendation for integrated research and development on biomass and biorefinery systems is \$72,596,000, the same as the budget request. Within available funds, the Committee recommendation includes \$1,500,000 for the Consortium for Plant Biotechnology Research (CPBR).

Geothermal Technology.--The Committee provides \$25,800,000 for geothermal technology development, the same as the budget request. The Department is directed to maintain funding for university research at the fiscal year 2004 funding level.

Hydrogen Technology.--The fiscal year 2005 budget request seeks \$95,325,000 for hydrogen research, an increase of \$17,785,000 or 23 percent over the fiscal year 2004 enacted level. In House Report 108-212 and again in the statement of managers accompanying the fiscal year 2004 conference report (House Report 108-357), this Committee reminded the Department of the competition and cost-sharing requirements specified in the Hydrogen Future Act of 1996 (P.L. 104-271) and directed the Department to compete the hydrogen research program to the fullest extent possible. Unlike most DOE research programs, the hydrogen technology research has a specific statutory authorization with specific conditions attached.

The Department blatantly ignored the Congressional direction contained in statute and report language regarding competition and cost sharing and announced in April 2004 the award of \$150 million in new hydrogen storage research projects. Of this amount, approximately \$120 million is dedicated to establishing three hydrogen storage 'centers of excellence' that are led by DOE national laboratories. The so-called competition was restricted to DOE laboratories, each of which selected its other laboratory, industry, and academic partners without competition. None of these funds for the 'centers or excellence' were awarded consistent with the Congressional view of competition; only the \$30 million awarded to fifteen independent storage projects was awarded competitively. The Department was clearly

determined to award the bulk of these hydrogen storage funds to its national laboratories without full and open competition and to persist in the fiction of 'pre-competitive R&D' despite explicit Committee guidance to the contrary. Further, the \$150 million of federal funding for hydrogen storage is to be matched by only \$20 million of private sector funding. The Hydrogen Future Act of 1996 directs the Secretary to require a commitment from non-Federal sources of at least 20 percent of the cost of proposed hydrogen research and development projects; the Secretary may reduce or eliminate the cost-sharing requirement if the Secretary determines that the research and development is of a basic or fundamental nature. However, the Department requested \$21.4 million for basic research on hydrogen under the Basic Energy Sciences program within the Office of Science. It is this Committee's view that the hydrogen research conducted and funded by the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy is applied research and is subject to the minimum cost sharing requirements established by the Hydrogen Future Act.

The Committee recommends \$64,285,000 for hydrogen technology work by the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy in fiscal year 2005, a reduction of \$31,040,000 from the budget request. This reduction represents the proposed fiscal year 2005 funding for the DOE laboratories that was awarded without full and open competition and without any cost sharing. The reduction includes the proposed awards for the three hydrogen storage 'centers of excellence' that were awarded to DOE laboratories, and their chosen industry and academic partners, without full and open competition. No funds are provided for the proposed \$7 million effort on hydrogen education. The Committee continues to support hydrogen research and provides funds for the Office of Nuclear Energy, Science, and Technology and the Office of Science for hydrogen-related research, with the expectation that those offices understand the distinction between basic and applied research and understand the Committee's guidance regarding competition and cost sharing. The Committee directs the Department to submit its budget request for fiscal year 2006 with all basic research on hydrogen included within the Office of Science; all hydrogen-related research of an applied nature is to be funded within the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy or the Office of Nuclear Energy, Science and Technology. The Committee expects the Department to comply with the spirit and the letter of the statutory cost-sharing requirements for applied research on hydrogen technologies, and to compete this work fully and openly. The awards to DOE laboratories, which this Committee views as non-competitive, are not funded under this fiscal year 2005 appropriation, and the Committee does not intend to fund such non-competitive awards in future fiscal years.

Hydropower- The Committee recommends \$5,000,000 for hydropower research, \$1,000,000 less than the budget request and essentially the same as provided in fiscal year 2004. As directed previously, the Department should focus its efforts on completing a limited program of testing and demonstration of new turbine technologies and then transfer these technologies to other Federal agencies and private sector firms for deployment. The proposed increase for advanced hydropower technology should be funded by the agencies that own and operate the Federal hydropower facilities, not by the Department of Energy.

Solar Energy- Solar energy technologies include: photovoltaic energy systems; solar heating and lighting, and concentrating solar power. These subprograms are combined into a single account for solar energy, and the control level for fiscal year 2005 continues at the solar energy program account level. The total Committee recommendation for solar energy in fiscal year 2005 is \$82,733,000, an increase of \$2,400,000 over the budget request. The Committee believes that the Department continues to underfund Concentrating Solar Power (CSP) technologies despite recent analyses documenting the potential of these technologies. The additional funds are provided to conduct CSP research at a level comparable to fiscal year 2004. The Committee directs Solar Heating and Lighting subprogram to be equally split between the Heating and Lighting research areas.

Wind energy systems- The Committee recommends \$41,600,000 for wind energy systems, the same as the budget request.

Intergovernmental activities- The Committee recommends \$17,000,000 for intergovernmental activities, an increase of \$1,000,000 over the budget request. This amount includes \$6,500,000 for the international renewable energy program, including \$1,500,000 for the International Utility Electricity Partnership (IUEP), \$5,500,000 for tribal energy, and \$5,000,000 for the Renewable Energy Production Incentive (REPI).

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