

Union of Concerned Scientists
Citizens and Scientists for Environmental Solutions

June 8th, 2009

The Honorable Peter Visclosky
Chairman
Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Ranking Member
Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Visclosky and Ranking Member Frelinghuysen:

In its FY2010 budget request, the Department of Energy (DOE) asks for important resources to support research and development of advanced vehicle technologies and fuels. These are essential to achieving national goals for energy security, sustainability and global competitiveness.

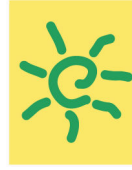
Attaining our national goal of sustainable transportation will require a diverse portfolio of advanced vehicles. Fuel cell vehicles should be part of our portfolio. Yet the Department of Energy proposed to eliminate funding for hydrogen fuel cell vehicles and for fuel cell deployment activities, cutting the program overall by two-thirds. We ask that you restore funding to FY 2009 levels.

Industry, academic researchers, and the Department of Energy, working together, have achieved substantial success in addressing technology, infrastructure and cost challenges. U.S. and international vehicle manufacturers have hundreds of vehicles on the road today and have made near-term commitments to building the fuel cell vehicle fleet. Together they have spent billions of dollars on research, an investment many times greater than the U.S. government's. Real world data collected by DOE and others confirms that fuel cell vehicles are inherently low in smog-causing emissions, cut carbon emissions by more than half and achieve nearly 60% efficiency, which is two to three times the fuel economy of comparable combustion vehicles.

Projected system costs in volume production have been cut by three-fourths since 2002 and long term fuel cost targets have already been achieved. Federal support in research, technology validation and hydrogen refueling infrastructure would build on these successes, preserve and create green jobs and establish a durable national energy policy.

Additional research and development are necessary in all the advanced vehicle and fuel pathways. All the pathways have a role to play in attaining national goals for greenhouse gas reductions and oil-free transportation. None of the advanced pathways are fully commercial yet. As the National Research Council concluded in its 2008 report on hydrogen:

At any point in time, a well-founded energy policy would support a portfolio of improving, emerging, and potentially revolutionary technologies, and it would influence both established companies and entrepreneurial ventures.



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We need to maintain momentum in the hydrogen fuel cell pathway as part of our national energy portfolio. We urge you to maintain U.S. leadership in developing and deploying fuel cell transportation by restoring fuel cell funding to FY 2009 levels.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers
American Lung Association
Electric Drive Transportation Association
National Hydrogen Association
Stella Group, Ltd.
Union of Concerned Scientists
U.S. Fuel Cell Council*