

Energy and Water Appropriations Act includes a total of \$153 million for hydrogen fuel cell research

Washington, DC – On Friday, Reps. Steve Israel (D – N.Y.) and Eric Massa (D – N.Y.) announced the passage of the Energy and Water Appropriations Act in the House of Representatives, including Reps. Israel and Massa’s amendment to restore \$45 million in hydrogen fuel cell research funding.

“Hydrogen fuel cell development is driving our auto industry into the future. New York is already home to important hydrogen fuel cell research and development centers. We can’t let Japan and Germany leap frog the United States in the implementation of this promising technology. That’s why I restored federal funding for hydrogen fuel cell research,” said Rep. Israel.

“I want to thank Congressman Israel for joining me in our effort to make a meaningful investment in zero-emission hydrogen fuel cell technology. My district has a 21st century, state of the art fuel cell research and development center where General Motors has built and is literally driving the cars of tomorrow. By making an investment in this technology today, we are paving the road toward the clean energy economy of the future,” said Rep. Massa.

The bi-partisan amendment was introduced by Reps. Israel, John Larson (D – Conn.), Massa, Charlie Dent (R – Penn.), Mike Doyle (D – Penn.) and Bob Inglis (R – S.C.).

Because of Reps. Israel and Massa’s amendment funding for the Department of Energy’s hydrogen fuel cell budget for FY2010 totals \$153 million. The initially proposed DOE budget included just \$68 million for hydrogen fuel cell research, a substantial decline from FY2009 levels. As a Member of the Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee, Rep. Israel was able to restore \$40 million in hydrogen fuel cell funding. Rep. Israel and Massa then worked to add an additional \$45 million in an amendment to the bill that was passed on the House floor as part of the Manager’s Amendment.

The DOE’s long-term plan for hydrogen fuel cell research, development, demonstration and deployment is on track to exceed its target goals, which includes achieving commercial viability of the technology in 2015.

Rep. Massa’s district includes a hydrogen fuel cell research facility. The GM Fuel Cell Development Center in Honeoye Falls, New York is one of only four such sites in the world. It is an integral part of General Motors fuel cell research and development initiatives. Approximately 350 engineers, scientists, and chemists research and develop fuel cell system technology that will allow GM to compete with other vehicle manufacturers. Reps. Israel and Massa visited the facility together earlier this year.

Hydrogen fuel cell technology has applications for the automotive industry, transportation, the military, and energy storage. Commercialization of this technology will likely result in the creation of hundreds of thousands of new jobs. This technology can help in efforts to create a zero-emission vehicle and is an integral part of a clean energy strategy.

In addition to hydrogen fuel cell technology, the Energy and Water Appropriations Act also makes investments in:

- Solar Energy: \$259 million for research, development, and demonstration projects to make solar energy more affordable.
- Biomass: \$235 million for grants to improve production of alternative fuels such as cellulosic ethanol and biodiesel.
- Smart Grid Technologies: \$62.9 million, \$30 million above 2009, for smart grid research and development.
- Clean Energy Transmission and Reliability: \$42 million to increase the efficiency of the grid and enable the widespread deployment of clean, domestic renewable energy.
- Nuclear Cleanup: \$5.4 billion to clean up contamination from nuclear weapons manufacturing and cancelled projects for handling spent nuclear fuel.

The Energy and Water Appropriations Act passed the House of Representatives on Friday by a vote of 320 to 97.

Rep. Israel serves on the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water and serves as a co-chair of the Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition. Rep. Massa is a member of the Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition.