

July 20, 2005

### Akin Encourages Further Hydrogen Fuel Research

**WASHINGTON , DC** - Congressman Todd Akin (R-MO), a member of the House Science Committee, encouraged further Hydrogen Fuel Research during today's hearing on hydrogen fuel cells.

Today's joint hearing of the House Science Subcommittees on Energy and Research on hydrogen fuel cells (HFCs) was a helpful step in moving the nation toward a more effective policy on this important matter, Congressman Todd Akin said today following the conclusion of the hearing.

Akin, a Member of both subcommittees, said that "Hydrogen fuel cell research holds great promise, and is significant for our country as a whole and for Missouri. A great deal of HFC research occurs in the St. Louis area, and with our substantial coal reserves HFC research would prove to be a dynamic economic benefit to our whole region and to the environment we all share. We need alternative forms of energy, and HFC research is essential to this end."

Akin submitted the following questions to two of today's key witnesses, Dr. David Bodde, Director of Innovation and Public Policy at Clemson University's International Center for Automotive Research and Dr. George Crabtree, Director of the Materials Science Division at Argonne National Laboratory:

Dr. Bodde: In your testimony, you stated that "coal offers the lowest cost pathway to a hydrogen-based energy economy." However, within the Department of Energy (DOE), the carbon sequestration program is managed separately from the hydrogen and vehicles programs. What can we do as a Congress to encourage greater cooperation between these programs and how does the current structure of DOE hinder efforts to use coal for hydrogen fuel cells?

Dr. Crabtree: You stated that a significant barrier to the United States becoming a hydrogen-based energy economy is the fact that “hydrogen must be produced from natural resources like fossil fuels, biomass or water...with...nearly all the hydrogen we use...produced by reforming natural gas.” I understand that the United States has significant supplies of natural gas as compared to oil. Does this enhance the viability for hydrogen-fuel cells over other sources of energy?

Akin will receive a formal response from the two witnesses in the near future.