

March 5, 2003

### Akin Supports Hydrogen Fuel in Science Committee's Initial Hearing

Washington, D.C.- The House Science Committee today held its first congressional hearing to examine the President's proposal to begin the transition to a more hydrogen-based economy.

Congressman Akin is a congressional leader in supporting the initiative as a critical element in America's plans for its energy future, one in which St. Louis can play a pivotal role with its world class universities and research institutions. Akin is a member of the Science Energy Subcommittee and is working with the Bush Administration and leading members of Congress to advance the case for Missouri's active participation in President Bush's Hydrogen Fuel Cell Initiative.

The proposed \$1.2 billion initiative, first announced by the President at his January State of the Union address, seeks to foster greater energy independence by providing an efficient, available and environmentally friendly fuel source. The initiative seeks to improve fuel cell technology and improve the storage and delivery of hydrogen fuel by accomplishing specific goals. A successful hydrogen alternative must have practical applications. To that end, the initiative has identified concrete goals, including the development of:

- Durable hydrogen fuel cells with higher efficiency and lower cost than current systems;
- Efficient, low cost and transportable fuel cells; and
- Efficient hydrogen refueling systems that deliver fuel at the market price of gasoline

Congressman Akin submitted the following testimony to the Science Committee:

"Mr. Chairman, as we have seen, the road to greater use of hydrogen in our economy faces many challenges which demand considerable time and effort. I would like to commend the witnesses today for their commitment to the President's Hydrogen Initiative and their work thus far. In the past, we have tried to address our energy dependency through the research and development of vehicle technology without the necessary infrastructure, with little regard to the importance of consumer demand and with a disturbing lack of concern for practical implementation of protracted research. I commend the witnesses in their efforts to provide us with a plan that addresses both long and short-term concerns relating to a hydrogen economy."