

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 13, 2011

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
House Committee on Appropriations
2362 B Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515-4324

The Honorable Peter J. Visclosky
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515-4324

Dear Chairman Frelinghuysen and Ranking Member Visclosky:

We are writing to express our strong support for the nation's fusion energy research programs. The substantial progress in fusion research is not often discussed in the context of our nation's energy future. But the reality is that fusion is one of a small number of truly base-load, sustainable, safe and secure energy options that can meet the scale of the national and global demand. The international community standing behind the ITER project, encouraging progress at our National Ignition Facility (NIF), and great science being conducted at both U.S. and international facilities, testify to the progress toward the goal of fusion energy. These clearly indicate the required path to deploying fusion energy to the electricity grid.

It is important and somewhat disturbing to note that China, South Korea, the European Union and Japan all have substantially more aggressive fusion energy programs than the U.S. does. Their programs include significant materials and technology development, as well as commitment to build one or more demonstration power plants within the next 10 to 15 years. Unfortunately, the U.S. has no similar commitment at this time. The U.S. has a proud history of leading the world in innovation and technology development and we should aspire to be the world leader in fusion energy.

Delivery of fusion energy on our planet is considered to be one of the grand challenges of science and technology. Like all grand challenges, there is no iron-clad guarantee of success, but the confidence and detailed plans of our domestic fusion scientists and

engineers along with the actions of these other nations, are strong indications that our nation can and should aspire to be the world's leader in fusion energy.

Therefore, as you move forward in your deliberations on this and upcoming budgets, we ask that you maintain the strength in our current fusion energy programs. We support the development of, and resources for, a more diverse, aggressive and competitive fusion energy program.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rush Holt

~~John L. ...~~

Bob Fisher

Laurie M. Aughton

Allen Lee

Zoe ...

Joy McNeely

Brian P. Gilman

Janet ...

Timothy ...

Bill ...

ST ...

Judy ...