

**CONGRESSMAN SHERWOOD BOEHLERT (R-NY)**  
**OPENING STATEMENT FOR ENERGY MARK-UP**

April 2, 2003

"It's a pleasure to welcome everyone here for today's mark-up of this vitally important bill.

As was the case with the Energy Bill in the last Congress, the Science Committee has put together a package that is bipartisan, comprehensive, forward-thinking and balanced. It should be a model for the larger energy package into which it will be incorporated this weekend. That package will be brought to the floor next week.

"Our starting point today is H.R. 238, which I introduced, along with Mr. Hall during the first week of this Congress. The language in the bill is the text of the tentative bipartisan agreement that was reached last year between the House and Senate conferees on the research and development title of H.R. 4.

"A lot of work went into that agreement, and it was fair and balanced, promoting R&D in energy efficiency and renewables, and nuclear and fossil fuels, as well as basic research in the Office of Science. It included major initiatives, such as the new ultra-deep drilling program and landmark compromise on the Clean Coal Program to ensure that it actually leads to true emissions reductions. So I'm pleased that last year's agreement is the foundation of what we'll be reporting out today

"But there have been important developments since the energy conference folded last November. So we've spent the last few weeks arduously negotiating changes to H.R. 238 to update the bill, and those changes are encompassed in the en-bloc amendment that I will be bringing forward with Mr. Hall today. Our partnership continues.

"There's a lot in the en bloc amendment, as we'll hear later. It also contains proposals that were put forward by numerous Members on both sides of the aisle, but let me focus now on the two primary elements of the amendment.

"First, it authorizes U.S. participation in the ITER, the international fusion experiment, with strict limitations to ensure that the U.S. financial exposure will be limited and to allow Congress to revisit the issue again before we move forward in earnest. This is especially vital because the U.S. fusion community does not want to participate in ITER if doing so will reduce funding for domestic fusion programs - and that principle is embodied in this bill, and will also be included in the report that accompanies the bill.

"Personally, I doubt that we will be able to fund ITER without cutting into our existing fusion programs, so we're going to have to examine our choices carefully when we have complete information on what ITER participation would mean. This bill will ensure that we get that information in a timely manner that enables us to make thoughtful decisions.

"I want to thank Ms. Lofgren and Mr. Nethercutt, two tireless advocates for fusion, for working with us on this language.

"The en bloc amendment also authorizes the President's Hydrogen Initiative and the related FreedomCAR program at the funding levels requested by the President. Our language fleshes out the areas of R&D the Initiative must cover; requires more extensive planning; and will ensure that demonstration projects actually help move us toward a transition to a hydrogen economy. This language will be one of the things that this bill is remembered for.

"The en bloc also increased funding for the Office of Science, something Mrs. Biggert has strongly advocated, and a step that is essential if we are to adequately fund the physical sciences.

"Members will offer a number of other amendments today - most of which have been negotiated between the majority and minority; a few others I will oppose. But I know that we will end on a note of unity, as this Committee always has.

"We will bring to the floor a bill that looks across all the forms of energy to ensure that the U.S. has a secure energy future in the decades to come."