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FPN06-16 Fusion Program Notes - University Group Comments on Fusion Budget

Stephen O. Dean
Fusion Power Associates
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In a one page document prepared for distribution to Congressional staff, the University Fusion Association (UFA) states "We strongly support the decision by the President and the Secretary of Energy to proceed with ITER in collaboration with international partners as the critical next-step towards the development of fusion energy as a major new source of non-carbon based energy for our nation and the world."

"However," the group notes, "the Administration's proposed budget for FY2007 would make broad cuts in university research programs, seriously damaging U. S. capabilities to benefit from ITER."

Although the President's FY2007 budget requests a \$31 million increase for the Department of Energy's Office of Fusion Energy Sciences relative to FY2006, ITER would receive a \$35 million increase, resulting in a net decrease of \$4 million in the U.S. domestic fusion energy sciences program. Furthermore, within the domestic budget, \$6M would be redirected to "higher priority" subprograms, resulting in a net \$10 million of reductions targeted towards university and other broader aspects of the fusion sciences program.

These proposed reductions are as follows:

- \$3.7 M from fusion materials research
- \$2.9 M from High Energy Density and Heavy Ion Fusion Research
- \$1.8 M from Innovative Confinement Concepts research
- \$1.0 M from fusion theory
- \$1.1 M from compact stellarator construction project

Although the President and the Secretary of Energy have announced plans to double funding for science over the next decade, DOE and OMB projections show that U. S. domestic fusion science would be held level. This has caused alarm in the U. S. fusion community, even as enthusiasm for proceeding with ITER construction rises.

DOE's Fusion Energy Sciences Advisory Committee (FESAC) has consistently warned the DOE that the U. S. domestic fusion research program must be strengthened as the U. S. proceeds with plans to participate in ITER.

A copy of the full UFA statement can be requested from UFA president Gerald Navratil:
navratil@columbia.edu

A separate "one-pager" prepared by others in the U. S. fusion community can be requested from Rob Goldston: rgoldston@pppl.gov