

HOUSE ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE ACTION
on FY 2009 Budget for fusion related items
June 23, 2008

Last week the House Energy and Water Development Subcommittee completed its action on their version of the FY09 Energy and Water Development bill. The draft report language is below. The full Committee is expected to take the bill up this week and neither the funding levels nor the language is expected to change substantially.

Timing and outlook for the full House to take up the bill and pass it seems very much up in the air. Further, the outlook for final Congressional action on any of the regular appropriations bills including Energy and Water is not good. Nonetheless, the language below may be considered to be a very important bellwether for next Congress' consideration of the FY09 bill in the event of a Continuing Resolution this year.

"FUSION ENERGY SCIENCES

The Committee recommendation for fusion energy sciences is \$499,050,000, an increase of \$6,000,000 over the budget request, and \$212,502,000 above the fiscal year 2008 enacted level. The Committee provides \$214,500,000 for the U.S. contribution to ITER as requested. The Committee recommendation includes \$24,626,000 for fusion energy sciences activities relevant to High Energy Density Laboratory Plasmas, one of six integrated research and development areas highlighted in the request. The Committee supports the decision by the Department to terminate the National Compact Stellarator Experiment (NCSX) and provides \$9,000,000 to ensure orderly closeout of the project. The additional \$6,000,000 above the request, as well as the funding which had been requested for NCSX and is not required for closeout, are to be utilized by the Department to help revitalize the domestic fusion energy sciences program. Given the tremendous potential of fusion energy to provide a long-term solution to our energy needs, this Committee believes it is essential that the U.S. continue to play a leadership role in this area. To this end, the Department is directed to provide the Committee with a report no later than March 1, 2009 which describes a bold, credible plan for a world-leading U.S. fusion program as this area becomes an increasingly international endeavor."

(exerpt from the Subcommittee's general DOE SCIENCE language)

"The Committee has some concerns regarding management practices at the Office of Science which must be resolved in order to ensure that the proposed increase is spent wisely. While the Office has recently shown its capacity to manage projects effectively, building the Spallation Neutron Source generally on budget, and on schedule, the Committee was disappointed to learn of the substantial cost overruns and schedule slippage that eventually force the recent termination of the construction of the National Compact Stellarator Experiment (NCSX), after an investment of over \$100,000,000. The Committee commends the efforts by the Department to re-assess the scientific merit and technical viability of the project once they became aware of the cost and schedule issues, and supports the decision by the Department to terminate the project. However, the Committee is concerned by the lack of oversight that allowed the project to proceed as far as it did without the kind of detail, independent technical design and costing validation that has

recently been undertaken, an issue that seems to arise over and over again across the Department. It is essential that adequate support is provided up front to establish the reliability of new technologies that will be used, and that complete end-to-end system engineering and design is performed before proceeding to construction."

"INERTIAL CONFINEMENT FUSION AND HIGH YIELD CAMPAIGN

The Committee recommendation provides \$508,062,000 for the Inertial Confinement Fusion and High Yield Campaign, an increase of \$86,820,000 over the budget request. Within the funds provided for Inertial Confinement Fusion and High Yield Campaign, the Committee recommends \$68,300,000, which is \$10,000,000 above the request, for the Laboratory for Laser Energetics. The Committee recommends increases of \$8,000,000 over the request for Ignition, \$14,600,000 for NIF Diagnostics, Cryogenics, and Experimental support; \$200,000 for Pulsed Power Inertial Confinement Fusion; \$20,820,000 for Facility Operations and Target Production; \$25,600,000 for Inertial Fusion Technology (HAPL), \$15,000,000 for the Naval Research Laboratory, and \$2,600,000 for NIF Assembly and Installation. The Committee recommends \$3,147,000, the same as the request, for the Joint Program in High Energy Density Laboratory Plasmas."