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Millions offered for hydrogen fuel ideas
Prizes seen as incentives to ease oil dependence

Published: Wednesday, December 19, 2007 - 2:00 am

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U.S. Rep. Bob Inglis of Greenville is scheduled to attend his first presidential bill-signing ceremony today for his role in making \$50 million in prize money available to inventors who advance hydrogen as a viable energy source.

The so-called H-Prize -- Inglis' top legislative priority in recent years -- was approved by the House on Tuesday as part of a huge energy bill. The Senate voted in favor of the bill last week, and President Bush is scheduled to sign it into law today during a ceremony at the Energy Department.

Inglis, a Republican, has touted the H-Prize for nearly three years as a way to help reduce the nation's dependence on foreign oil. The measure authorizes four \$1 million prizes and one \$4 million prize every two years for a decade, as well as one \$10 million grand prize for a "transformational technology."

"My only disappointment is that it's not a billion-dollar prize," Inglis said during a conference call with reporters shortly after the energy bill passed by a wide margin. Joining him on the call was Rep. Dan Lipinski, an Illinois Democrat who also sponsored the H-Prize legislation.

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Inglis and Lipinski said they also were behind a different measure in the energy bill that requires federal buildings to use energy-efficient light bulbs and imposes new efficiency standards for light bulbs.
