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## Inglis hails H-Prize passage

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**WASHINGTON** — The headline feature of the energy bill President Bush was to sign into law today is the first new fuel-efficiency standards for cars in a generation.

U.S. Rep. Bob Inglis, invited by Bush to the bill-signing ceremony, hopes that separate provisions he crafted could have greater impact in the long run.

The energy measure, which the House passed Tuesday on a 314-100 vote, authorizes the federal government to give tens of millions of dollars to winners of a new prize aimed at speeding the development and widespread use of hydrogen-fueled cars.

South Carolina, especially Columbia, has made the pursuit of hydrogen fuel cell technology a building block for the state's future economy. The state could be in line to claim some of that money.

"We can clean up the air, we can create jobs and we can improve the national security of the United States by reducing our energy dependency on foreign fuels," said Inglis, a Greenville Republican completing his fifth House term.

Separate Inglis provisions, also included in the energy bill, require most federal government buildings and other installations to use energy-efficient lights.

The cost of producing and transporting has slowed the development of hydrogen-powered cars in the United States, as has the weight and size of hydrogen fuel cells for cars.

But Honda, BMW and General Motors are spending billions of dollars on hydrogen vehicle prototypes.

Inglis said his "H-Prize" idea will accelerate momentum toward such cars by establishing prestigious awards carrying large cash payments to winners.

"We want teams of entrepreneurs and inventors pushing themselves," Inglis said.

Others in the delegation welcomed the bill's passage.

"The fuel-efficiency authorizations in this bill are estimated to save American families close to \$1,000 a year at the gas pump," said Rep. Jim Clyburn, a Columbia Democrat and the House majority whip.

Rep. John Spratt, a York Democrat, joined Clyburn in voting for the energy measure Tuesday. Inglis and fellow Republican Reps. Joe Wilson of Springdale and Henry Brown of Hanahan also voted for the broader legislation.

Republican Rep. Gresham Barrett, a Westminster Republican, voted against the energy bill.

Aides to Barrett said he opposed the measure because it de-emphasizes production of power from proven sources such as oil, gas, coal, water or nuclear plants.

Inglis credited Sen. Lindsey Graham, a Seneca Republican, with helping to sell the H-Prize to Sen. Pete Domenici of New Mexico, senior Republican on the Senate Energy Committee. Aides to Domenici had previously opposed the idea, Inglis said.

Bush said he would sign the broader energy measure even though it split House Republicans in half, with 95 GOP members voting for it and 96 opposing it.

Rosen covers Washington for McClatchy Newspapers in South Carolina.