

The Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technical Advisory Committee
Washington, D.C.

The Hon. Dr. Steven Chu
Secretary of Energy
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20585

March, 2012

Dear Mr. Secretary:

It is with great pleasure that we enclose with this letter the 2011 Annual Report prepared by your Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technical Advisory Committee (HTAC). This is the fourth such report and the series makes it very clear that, with support from DoE's Fuel Cell Technologies Program, progress in bringing Hydrogen and Fuel Cell (HFC) technologies to the marketplace has been, and continues to be, very impressive:

- Costs of all key HFC components are coming down, while durability and lifetime are improving;
- There has been significant commercial growth in fuel cell lift trucks and stationary power;
- The world automotive industry continues to move actively toward a 2015 milestone for commercial introduction of HFC vehicles;
- While build out of needed Hydrogen Infrastructure remains a challenge, commitments have been made by several nations to insure that needed fueling capability will be in place to enable the HFC vehicles to be introduced as planned;
- It is becoming increasingly clear that HFC technologies have the potential to play an important role in enabling large penetrations of intermittent renewable energy technologies to be integrated with the grid.

Our 2011 Annual Report documents succinctly the progress made in all aspects of HFC technology during the year, with a strong emphasis on documenting steps made toward achieving cost and performance goals set by DoE, in cooperation with industry. Not all of the goals have been met in full yet, but progress has been robust enough that commercial introduction of HFC technologies is well underway in several markets – notably backup power and material handling – and supply chains are being activated in the automotive market.

The most serious concern reflected in our report, as in past years, is that the U.S. competitive position in the international HFC technology race to market continues to slip behind other nations. Japan, Korea, and Germany are taking a much more aggressive approach than we are toward stimulating and supporting market introduction of HFC vehicles and stationary products. The proposed substantial reduction in the Fuel Cell Technologies Program budget for FY 2013 was not an encouraging signal that the U.S. takes this competitive threat seriously. We urge DoE and the Administration to take more vigorous steps to restore the nation's leadership position in these important elements of a balanced advanced energy portfolio.

We would very much appreciate the opportunity to brief you on the findings in our 2011 Annual Report, and would welcome your participation in the forthcoming HTAC meeting, and Blue Ribbon Panel on Hydrogen Production, scheduled for May 9-12 of this year.

With warm regards,



Dr. Robert W. Shaw, Jr.
HTAC Chair

Enclosure: 2011 HTAC Annual Report