

WASHINGTON- Today, Congressmen Spencer Bachus and Mike Rogers announced that the House Committee on Appropriations has approved a bill that would provide \$3.5 million to fund Auburn University's hydrogen fuel-cell research program. Hydrogen fuel cells are considered to be the future of the automobile industry.

In December, Auburn University successfully demonstrated their technology to the Department of Defense.

"This gives every reason to be optimistic that we are on the threshold of a major advancement in transportation technology developed right here in Alabama," said Bachus.

Bachus added, "Congressman Rogers and I have worked together to secure this funding for Auburn University to continue their work in this vital area of research. Because fuel-cell technology is three times more efficient than regular petroleum, hydrogen powered vehicles have the potential to save the Department of Defense considerable amounts of money."

Rogers said Auburn University has been talking with Department of

Defense officials at the Anniston Army Depot about the possibility of one day including their research into the production of military vehicles manufactured at the depot. Currently, all vehicles produced by the Anniston Army Depot utilize diesel engines, which are prime candidates for fuel-cell technology upgrades.

"Motorists all across Alabama are feeling pain at the pump," Rogers said. "It is vital we develop a long range energy plan that includes alternative fuels, and I am delighted Auburn University will continue to lead efforts that could provide relief to Alabama motorists and further bolster our national defense."

Rogers, a member of the House Armed Services Committee, added while the bill containing the funding must still be passed by both the House and the Senate, the additional assistance could help the nation develop new technologies that allow it to be less dependent on foreign oil.

Bachus agreed, saying, "This research funding is, of course, good news for Auburn University's engineering school, the Anniston Army Depot, and Alabama's automobile industry. Of even greater significance, the research promises to provide the technology to

help solve America's need for affordable transportation that doesn't exhaust our energy resources."

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