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NEWS RELEASE

Committee on Energy and Commerce

Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman

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Washington, DC – A highly touted Department of Energy (DOE) nonproliferation program, which is intended to keep Soviet-era scientists from migrating to rogue states following the collapse of the Soviet Union, has been funding Russian research institutes that support nuclear projects in Iran, two key lawmakers said today in a letter to Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman.

Reps. John D. Dingell (D-MI), Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and Bart Stupak (D-MI), Chairman of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee, wrote Bodman regarding the Department of Energy's Initiatives for Proliferation Prevention Program (IPP). The letter from Stupak and Dingell notes that two IPP-funded institutes in Russia have performed work on the Buhsher nuclear reactor in Iran. The revelations come the day before Bodman is expected to testify before the Committee on Energy and Commerce on the Department of Energy's Fiscal Year 2009 Budget.

“Only this Administration would complain about proliferation in Iran, as part of President Bush’s nuclear axis of evil, and then finance it with American taxpayer dollars,” said Dingell. “Heads should roll.”

“During our hearing in January, Department of Energy and State Department witnesses told me they didn’t know if the United States is funding projects at institutes that are also doing work for the Iranian nuclear program,” Stupak said. “We now know that they are. I find it to be a rather schizophrenic foreign policy position for the Bush Administration to label Iran part of the ‘axis of evil’ but then send millions of U.S. tax dollars intended for non-proliferation programs to Russian institutes that are doing work on Iran’s nuclear program. I look forward to hearing the Energy and State Departments’ justifications for such a policy.”

Dingell and Stupak’s letter references Russian-origin documents that describe the activities of two IPP-funded institutes that are involved with Iran’s nuclear program, the Scientific Research Institute of Measuring Systems (NIIS) and the Federal Scientific Research Institute of Nuclear Machine Building (OKBM). One presentation by NIIS describes the institute’s work on automated nuclear reactor control systems for Buhsher and other plants. NIIS receives \$2.65 million in projects from the Department of Energy’s IPP. A presentation by OKBM, which has built seven heavy-water reactors, describes work at Buhsher reactor installing hundreds of circulation pumps and ventilation equipment. The Department of Energy has approved a 3-year \$1.037 million jointly funded project to develop submersible pumps for integral water reactors as part of the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP). OKBM has received a second project worth \$1 million from IPP on radioactive medical waste management.

The letter from Dingell and Stupak continues by noting that DOE’s funding of Russian institutes working on the Buhsher reactor could potentially enable the transfer of technology that could be used not only for reactors, but for nuclear proliferation purposes. Further, ongoing civilian nuclear work could allow a country to move to the edge of nuclear weapons capability, situating itself only months away from nuclear weapons production once the country decides to proliferate.

Dingell and Stupak’s letter continues by asking the Department of Energy to provide detailed information regarding the IPP, including a comprehensive list of all IPP-funded Russian institutes performing work in Iran and whether scientists funded by the US are specifically working on Iranian nuclear projects.

[read the letter »](#)

[read Russian power point slides](#)

(referenced in the letter)

[Attachment 1 »](#)

[Attachment 2 »](#)

Prepared by the Committee on Energy and Commerce

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