



Daily NewsNotes

Daily News Updates for the Advanced Transportation Industry

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National Fuel Cell Bus Initiative Passed

Pasadena, Calif. - Congress has approved \$49-million in funding for the National Fuel Cell Bus Technology Development Program as a component of the just-passed \$287-billion Transportation Equity Act of 2005. According to a WestStart-CALSTART release, the ambitious, competitive four-year hydrogen and fuel cell bus research and development program will speed work to make hydrogen and fuel cell buses commercially viable, focusing on critical areas of technology development. WestStart-CALSTART, together with a national team of more than 30 leading bus makers, operators and technology developers, formed the National Fuel Cell Bus Technology Initiative (NFCBTI) and led the effort to ensure funding for this critical effort to keep America competitive in these new technologies. In a time of tight budgets, we commend Congress for giving the U.S. an important chance to be a leader in technology that can help improve urban air quality and reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, said WestStart-CALSTART's President and CEO, John Boesel. Though the measure received strong bipartisan support across the country, we want to particularly recognize the leadership of Congressman James Oberstar (D-MN) and Congresswoman Mary Bono (R-CA). WestStart-CALSTART and NFCBTI supporters believe that the transit bus market is the best early market for the development and introduction of vehicular fuel cell technology. Transit's centralized refueling stations and the ability to place hydrogen cylinders on the roof of a bus eliminate two major challenges to the introduction of fuel cells in passenger cars, the lack of refueling infrastructure and the space requirements for hydrogen storage. Transit also has a history of being first to introduce new fuels and technology.

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