



15 August 2014

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Energy & Water Development
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
186 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy & Water Development
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
186 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Feinstein and Ranking Member Alexander:

As you move forward with work on the FY15 Energy & Water Appropriations bill, IEEE-USA urges you to support the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) project.

The present fusion knowledge base, which has enabled the world fusion community to proceed with ITER, largely derives from past decades of fruitful U.S. research and development by a highly productive and innovative U.S. scientific and engineering workforce.

Concerns about the ability of the ITER project to establish a reliable cost and schedule baseline, as well as other concerns identified in the latest management assessment report have, understandably, tested the patience of Congress. However, it is important to note that the specific recommendations identified in the latest management report have all been unanimously accepted by the ITER Council and Director-General. Moreover, implementation plans for addressing these concerns have been developed and are currently in the process of being executed to safeguard that the overall ITER project governance and management are fit for the needs of the next phase of the project.

While this large-scale multinational collaboration to construct the world's first powerplant-scale experimental fusion facility has not been without challenges, continued U.S. participation will help ensure America's influential role is maintained in meeting those challenges. Ultimately, the ITER project is a great opportunity to gain from the wide-ranging technological advancements and overall benefits of fusion development and scientific cooperation on a global scale. Indeed, IEEE-USA agrees, as the House-passed FY15 House Energy & Water Appropriations report affirms regarding ITER, "It remains the most practical U.S. investment in the fusion energy sciences..."

As the FY15 Energy and Water Appropriations measures make their way through the legislative process, IEEE-USA urges you to accede to the House-passed level of \$225 million for the U.S. contribution to the ITER project, and maintain basic fusion research and development funding at an ample level. This sustained support will allow the U.S. to leverage the benefits of prior investments and move a step closer to realizing the promising prospect of virtually limitless energy.

Sincerely,

Gary L Blank, Ph.D.
IEEE-USA President

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IEEE-USA | 2001 L Street, N.W., Suite 700, Washington, D.C. 20036-4928 USA
Office: +1 202 785 0017 | Fax: +1 202 785 0835 | E-mail: ieeusa@ieee.org | Web: <http://www.ieeeusa.org>