



Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor / Jack Lavin, Director

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DCEO Sponsors Fuel Cell Industry Meeting *Illinois Fuel Cell Leaders Plan For "Hydrogen Economy"*

DES PLAINES – Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) Director Jack Lavin today outlined the State of Illinois' efforts to commercialize fuel cell technology during remarks at the "Building an Illinois Fuel Cell Industry" meeting held at the Gas Technology Institute in Des Plaines, Illinois.

"Illinois is in a strong position to take fuel cells to the next level. Since the 1950s, our state has played a major role in propelling fuel cells to the brink of commercialization," Lavin said. "Under Governor Rod Blagojevich's leadership, DCEO will continue to foster the development of fuel cell technologies."

The first-ever meeting of fuel cell industry leaders in Illinois comes on the heels of President George Bush's \$1.2 billion legislative proposal to advance fuel cell technology at the national level. Fuel cells are twice as efficient as internal combustion engines and release only water vapor. The result is greater energy security without harmful emissions.

Lavin pointed to partnerships between DCEO and Argonne National Laboratory, the Illinois Institute of Technology and Gas Technology Institute as evidence of the State of Illinois' ongoing commitment to fuel cell research. Since the 1990s, DCEO has funded fuel cell research, development and demonstration projects conducted by Caterpillar, Nuvera Fuel Cells, Williams Bio-Energy, the Renewable Fuel Association, the Illinois Corn Growers, HyRadix and two electric cooperatives.

DCEO renewable energy grants have provided \$250,000 for research into ethanol reformers that convert ethanol or gasoline into hydrogen for fuel cells, and \$550,000 in funding for the development of stationary fuel cells that can supply power to local grids.

"This meeting of Illinois' fuel cell industry leaders paves the way for establishing new partnerships that will lead to new technologies to power our future and protect our environment," Lavin added.

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