

FUNDING WOULD HELP TO PRESERVE AS MANY AS 100 JOBS AT PPPL

(Princeton, NJ) – U.S. Rep. Rush Holt (D-NJ-12) and Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-NJ-11) today visited the Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory (PPPL) to announce that the U.S. House of Representatives has passed legislation to restore \$76 million in funding for fusion energy research.

The funding, which supports the PPPL and other energy research laboratories, was not included in the President's Fiscal Year 2013 budget request. Without the funding, PPPL would face severe cutbacks on crucial research projects and staff reductions of as many as 100 persons, including scientists, engineers, and lab technicians.

"Fusion research is key to America's energy future, and we are proud to have this important work in New Jersey," said Holt, who was the assistant director of the PPPL before his election to Congress. "If you look around us today, you'll see workers in lab coats, workers in suits, and workers in jeans and hardhats – in other words, a broad cross-section of the New Jersey workforce. All of these jobs, and all of their crucial research, are placed at risk by efforts to cut basic research."

"Faced with unsustainable budget deficits, we are making difficult funding decisions," Frelinghuysen said. "But I will be working with my colleagues in the Senate to ensure that the PPPL's cutting-edge research to create alternative sources of energy moves forward."

After the President announced his plans earlier this year to cut funding for fusion energy research, Holt gathered a coalition of 48 bipartisan members of Congress to oppose the cuts. The group wrote a letter to Frelinghuysen in his role as chairman of the U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, asking that the funding be restored.

"Clean energy is an area in which our government can ill-afford to fall behind," the bipartisan coalition wrote. "We will cede further advantage to countries such as China, South Korea, Japan, and the European Union, all of which are pursuing substantially more aggressive fusion research."

programs than our own.”

In response, Frelinghuysen authored legislative language restoring full funding for fusion energy research in the Fiscal Year 2013 Energy and Water Appropriations Bill. The bill passed the U.S. House of Representatives on June 6, 2012.

“I asked Representative Frelinghuysen to join us at PPPL today mostly so that we could say, ‘Thank you,’” Holt said. “His leadership is admirable and deeply appreciated. The Senate still must pass an energy bill that retains this new funding, but thanks to his efforts, the momentum is moving in the right direction.”

Holt and Frelinghuysen were hosted by Stewart Prager, the director of the PPPL, and Shirley M. Tilghman, the president of Princeton University.

"We are delighted to host Representatives Rodney Frelinghuysen and Rush Holt at the Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory," said Prager. "They are remarkable champions of science and possess a profound understanding of science and its enormous benefits to society. The funding bill they both fought for is exceedingly important for the advancement of fusion energy, paving the way for new pathways for the U.S."